LIBERATION AND IMAGINATION:
A NEW THEOLOGICAL LANGUAGE IN RESPONSE TO THE MARXIST CRITIQUE OF RELIGION

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVE, AND METHOD

The Convergence of Two Languages

In recent years, roughly about the last ten, two distinct language sets have been gathering momentum in theological and philosophical writings, the emergence of which suggests that two new and distinct experiences are being encountered by communities of people on a fairly grand scale. The first set of words clusters around the word "liberation," the other around "imagination." The first set includes many old words and some new ones, all regrouped and given a new thrust and meaning. Some of the old words are: oppressed and oppressors, colonization, humanization, praxis, radical, freedom, justice, and hope; the new words: third world, the great refusal, the new sensibility, and conscientization. The second set has its own distinct character; and while the words themselves are not original, their new association in the language and social setting seems to give them a fresh and original flavor. The actors in this language are creators, artisans, mystics, visionaries, prophets, utopians, jesters, and harlequins, whose corresponding activities are expressed by new creation, fantasy, vision, denunciation and annunciation, utopia, humor, play, and dance.

In the discovery of these sets of languages, made in our search for a political theology, we tried to understand what the connection was. Our curiosity was drawn into a search through theological journals and books. Our venture was immeasurably assisted by discussions with colleagues at a conference of all the learned societies of religion in the United States held in Los Angeles in 1972, as well as with colleagues and professors at the University of Southern California. From this preliminary research and discussion, we observed a convergence of these two apparently unrelated languages. The pattern is visible in the works of a number of different theologians.

Leading off the list is Harvey Cox, as might be expected, bellwether that he is. In his book *The Feast of Fools*, Cox shows that fantasy, which on the socio-political level may be called "utopian thought," is able to create images "by which existing societies can be cracked open and recreated."[1] Writing in 1969, he laments the fact that traditional utopian thinking, as expressed in the works of Thomas More, Edward Bellamy, Tommaso Campanella, and many others, has had a strong impact upon building a new social structure; but over the past 200 years, this kind of radical thinking has steadily declined and atrophied. "Unlike previous generations whose visions of the society exceeded their means of accomplishing them, we suffer from a surplus of means and a shortage of visions."[2]

In the recent writings of the German theologian, Dorothee Sölle, one cannot fail to notice the new languages of liberation and imagination converging. Arguing against an authoritarian type of obedience within the social system and churches of her native land, Sölle proposes the concept of *phantasie* as a replacement for that type of obedience which accepts existing unjust hardships, is supportive of law and order, and faithful to duty despite dehumanizing social structures or existing evils.[3] The concept of *phantasie*, or imagination, is a form of freedom which comes into being as one encounters the world, resulting in an awakened self-consciousness and a completely open acceptance of others. Born of fulfillment, imagination is a new way of seeing, is boundary breaking, and is intent on transforming the world.

> *Phantasie* is the *gewusst wie*, the "know how" of love. It never retires before it has achieved some new insights. It is inexhaustible in the discovery of new and better ways. It is ceaselessly at work improving the welfare of others.[4]

People who acquire fulfillment, spontaneity, and freedom, all qualities of the imagination, become liberated. However, imagination is not purchased. It is a gift, a grace which gives a person a new being, a freedom from his own fears, and a new task of transforming the world.[5]

A quick glance at the table of contents of Rubem Alves' two principal books reveals the author's ultimate concern in his theological reflection, which again is dressed in two vocabularies. In *A Theology of Human Hope*, published in 1969, all six chapter headings contain the word "freedom":

1. Search for Freedom
2. Vocation for Freedom
3. The Historicity of Freedom
4. The Dialectics of Freedom
5. The Gift of Freedom: Man's Freedom for Life
6. Theology as a Language of Freedom

Freedom, which is used almost interchangeably with liberation, is defined by Alves as a power to create something new in history. Liberation refers more precisely to the process by which a people achieves its full freedom.[6] In the final chapter of the book, he introduces the power of the imagination, which is necessary to create the language of freedom. "A language created by imagination is able to 'name the things that are absent' and when it does this, it breaks the spell of the things that are present."[7]

In Alves' second book, *Tomorrow's Child*, published three years later, the other key word emerges and is likewise headlined in the table of contents. The word "imagination" appears in six of the eleven chapter headings, as well as in the subtitle of the book. The power of the imagination is analyzed in the context of trying to create a qualitatively new society and in the attempt of seeking the liberation of the oppressed people from their present inhuman situation.[8] The chapter titles in both books would suggest that for Alves the key concepts of freedom and imagination are both essential for maintaining human life. A deeper investigation of these two books and other writings bears out our initial insight that the controlling concepts for Alves' political ethics are freedom (and liberation), imagination, and human life.

A fourth figure whose theological writings bring together the notions of liberation and imagination is Gustavo Gutierrez. His principal work is *A Theology of Liberation*, a well-documented, comprehensive analysis of the liberation process, especially as it is unfolding in Latin America. In this book, published in English in 1973, Gutierrez describes liberation as a single, historical process having three distinct, but essentially related, dimensions of faith, political action, and utopia. The dimension of utopia, which Harvey Cox and Paul Blanquart define as the creative imagination functioning on the sociopolitical level, constitutes the essence of the creative and dynamic aspects of science. Gutierrez himself describes utopia as "the theoretical construct, which allows us to know social reality and which makes political action efficacious, demands the mediation of the creative imagination."[9] Opposing the view that liberation is *simply* the struggle against misery, injustice, and exploitation (the political dimension of liberation), he argues that Christians should also participate in liberating oppressed peoples by seeking "the creation of a new man" who takes greater responsibility in imaginatively shaping his future. "They [Christians] see clearly that they cannot be authentic Christians unless they act. But what they are to do to achieve this just world calls for great effort and imagination."[10]

The fifth theologian whose recent writings illustrate the convergence of two apparently unrelated theological languages is Jürgen Moltmann. Speaking at the Conference on Hope and the Future of Man in 1971, Moltmann, in response to opening presentations, clearly and forcefully identifies himself with liberation theology.

> Only *liberation theology* is for me a theology which radically focuses on Christian hope, as it has been proposed in this country by James H. Cone and Frederick Herzog. Here the future of God and the future of humanity of man begin in the transforming thought *of the present*. Without metanoia no hope. Without transformation of the inhuman system in which we white, rich peoples are imprisoned as the producers of the misery of others, there will be no future which could reasonably be related to God and the humanity of man.[11]

Moltmann, who is ordinarily associated with the theology of hope movement along with Gerhard Sauter, Wolfhart Pannenberg, and Johannes Metz, emphasizes in this response that Christian hope is an essential virtue in liberation theology, and is a hope that is made possible by religious conversion of man and by an active engagement in improving living conditions of people. Hope is thus related to the planning and projection of a new society which demand the use of the creative imagination. Moltmann discusses the dynamics of liberation in the context of ethics, which stresses a Christian's obligation to transform coercive social conditions, and aesthetics, which highlights man's creative imagination which assists in the humanizing emancipation of man.[12]

In summary, all five of these theologians, Cox, Sölle, Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann, are concerned with the liberation of all people throughout the world, although admittedly from different perspectives and traditions. Each has incorporated the language of imagination as an important dimension of the liberation process. The convergence, in their writings, of these two distinct, but related languages does not imply that all liberation theology is replete with language of the imagination. Nor does it suggest that all theological works on fantasy are connected with liberation. There are many books and articles representing both theological areas where there is no such convergence.[13] But the fact that a significant number of contemporary theologians have stressed the imaginative power of man as a necessary tool in his struggle for freedom and justice does give warrant to the conviction that liberation and imagination are not strange bedfellows.

The reasons for this convergence are many and will surface during the course of this research. An important one, which is the source of profound concern for us, is the condition of psychological, political, and economic oppression of millions of people in Chicago, Peru, and Northern Brazil--an oppressive and poor situation that calls for liberation by the people themselves who must actively and imaginatively begin to transform the conditions of oppression and exploitation. But as an oppressed people begin to awaken from their passive state and consolidate their forces, outside powers try to convince the emerging people to imitate a certain economic and social structure, such as the Soviet Union's system of communism or the model of development foisted on Latin American nations by Western powers. But many studies of the economy of the nations which have bought the developmental model indicate an increasing disparity between the developed nations and the so-called "underdeveloped" nations. A declaration by a group of priests in Peru in 1968 points to the inequality.

> Peru is clearly a proletarian nation in the community of nations. The average Peruvian has an annual income of 11,200 soles, while the world average is 24,000 soles, the average in developed nations is 48,000 soles, and the average in the United States is 112,000 soles (ten times ours!). This gap between the developed and the underdeveloped nations, instead of decreasing, is increasing radically day by day.[14]

As a result of the increasing gap, the people of the underdeveloped nations are less willing to accept prepackaged models with strings of domination attached. Now more sophisticated, the poorer nations recognize the ideologies of nations which try to impose a certain structure or policy on them. Neocolonialism exists between nations; but,

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at the same time, an internal colonialism is perpetrated by the privileged elite who conserve their vast wealth at the expense of millions by means of a semifeudal regime, sometimes supported by a military dictatorship, such as in Brazil, and often by a cooperating or at least passive church.[15] As the oppressed become conscienticized to the causes of their poverty and to the possibilities for change, they begin to reject the imitation of values and structures of other nations and to imagine new possibilities for creating their culture and economy anew. The first step toward liberation is to assume one's responsibility as a creative subject.

Problem, Objective, and Method

Problem

As we suggested above, Christian churches have played and continue to play an important role vis-à-vis the oppression and/or the liberation of many millions of people throughout the world. Liberation theology is above all a theology created to explore the possibility of liberating the churches from their past apathy and even complicity regarding discriminating and exploiting social practices in society. Moltmann notes the departure of many Christians from the established German churches because of their complicity with dominating classes, races, and nations. "We are searching for a church which initiates actions for liberation groups without calculating self interest."[16] Gutierrez, reflecting on the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America, says that it was born alienated because decisions regarding its fate were made outside, more often in Madrid than in Rome. This alienation, which he describes below, led to a defensiveness which eventually became expressed in a passivity and a complicity with established powers.

> After the independence of the last century, a kind of "ecclesiastical colonial pact" was established: Latin America provides the devout, the veneration of Mary and devotion to the Pope; Rome and the Churches of the Northern hemisphere, contribute to the study of the Latin American problems, the naming of bishops, the money for works and missions. . . . The most obvious consequence of this situation is that the Latin American christian community has lived and is living largely withdrawn into its own shell. Born during the Counter Reformation period, the Latin American Church is marked by a defensive attitude. This attitude is accentuated by the attacks which she received at the beginning of the era of political independence, and more recently by the critics who see the Church as an obstacle for the social transformation of the continent. All this made the Church connect herself out of inertness or out of fear, to political power and the powerful economic groups.[17]

Those who see the church as an obstacle to social transformation have echoed Marx' criticism that religion is the opiate of the people. The criticism cannot easily be answered in the light of the churches' past and present conservative positions in the United States, Latin America, and Europe. Dom Helder Camara, Bishop of Recife, Brazil, comments on the applicability of this criticism.

> Is there not a glaring contrast between the big wealthy churches and the shocking poverty that surrounds them? Have not our actions given a semblance of truth to Marx's claims that religion is the opiate of the people? Has not our passive brand of Christianity made and kept them alienated?[18]

Liberation theology, a theology that emphasizes social and political liberation, the creative participation of the oppressed themselves, and the identification of churches and theology with the oppressed and suffering, may also be viewed as a theology which addresses itself to the criticism that Marx made of religion and of the Christian churches of nineteenth-century Europe. Since the time of that famous criticism in 1843, many apologias have been made by theologians and Christian churches. Some have denied the criticism, others have ignored it, and still others have tried to honestly grapple with Marx' criticism as well as with the philosophy of Marxism. Responses from theologians belonging to the third group will be presented as historical background in this research. Marx not only criticized the empirical churches of his day, but attempted to show that religion, as a symptom of the deep alienation resulting from capitalist society, was illusory and would disappear with abolition of the class society.

The problem before us is this: Does liberation theology, with its two emphases on the importance of creativity and imagination and on praxis, avoid the twin dangers of spiritualism and materialism? The spiritualist tendency may be expressed either by a strong emphasis on the future Kingdom, or by overstressing consciousness-raising, or imaginative activity that does not lead to practice. The materialist tendency is related to concentrating too much on political activism, transformation of social structure, and revolutionary praxis. Both of these tendencies are explored in discussing Hegelianism and Marxism in Chapter II.

Objective

The objective of this research was to determine how adequately three liberation theologians responded to the Marxist critique of religion as the opiate of the people. The three theologians selected for this research were Rubem Alves, Gustavo Gutierrez, and Jürgen Moltmann. Dorothee Sölle and Harvey Cox were not included simply because the task of the research would have been too cumbersome and because the three theologians selected represent a good cross-section of different liberation theologies that are emerging today. In trying to determine adequacy, we focused on three themes that we found permeating the writings of these theologians. These are the theme of political and personal liberation within an eschatological framework, the theme of man's creative imagination or utopian thinking as an important element in the liberating process, and the theme of praxis, a concept growing out of Marx' writings, that emphasizes social transformation of structures in society. In order to evaluate the adequacy of each response, we were required to settle on some criteria. This is discussed in the following section.

Method

In attempting to evaluate a political theology, we must determine whether and to what extent the theology is ideological. Ideology, as we are using it, is a system of thought which is closely identified with a particular religion, nation, or culture, but which at the same time claims universality in its doctrine, often to the advantage of that religion, nation, or culture. In other words, ideology makes absolute a part for the whole, thus giving a distorted representation of reality. With respect to a political or liberation theology, an ideology may be present in different forms. On the material side, liberation theology, intended to be universally valid, may in effect be culture-bound.

Such criticism is sometimes heard with respect to Latin American liberation theology.[19] Since the theologians being studied in this research emphasize imagination, aesthetics, and utopian thinking, their theologies may also contain the ideology of spiritualism. Theology of hope, which is the basis for Moltmann's political theology, is sometimes challenged as an ideology because of its emphasis on God's future promise which becomes present through faith and hope. Hence, we must investigate any traces of ideology, whether it be the materialist or spiritualist type, in the three liberation theologies. In trying to avoid these polarities, a political theologian needs to integrate a theology which is universal in scope with the social, political, and economical realities of society. Faith must illumine, judge, and be directed toward practice; practice must in turn challenge and make more concrete one's faith. Defining the criteria of faith and praxis is the first step in our methodology.

In order to accomplish this, we adopt a comparative historical method. In the first phase, we examine Marx' criticism of religion in order to understand his position. Since his criticism of religion develops out of the controversy between Marx, Hegel, and the Young Hegelians, we place the criticism in the context of Marx' criticism of Hegel, Bruno Bauer, and Feuerbach. From this discussion, we derive the first criterion, that of praxis.

In the second phase, we examine three responses to Marxism: Those of Barth, Tillich, and Reinhold Niebuhr. Here we are interested in finding out how each of these theologians tries to steer the middle course between the materialist and spiritualist ideologies. From this phase we derive our second criterion of faith, and specifically the eschatological element. After having completed the historical analysis of Marxism and the theologians and after having defined our two criteria of faith and praxis, we investigate the liberation theologies of Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann. We assume that when theory and praxis are integrated and balanced, that model of theology offers a satisfactory response to the Marxist critique of religion as well as offering the most effective theology for dealing with the problems of an oppressed and dependent people.

In applying these two criteria to the liberation theologians, we proceed in three steps. In Chapter III, we make a general presentation of each theology, defining the important concepts and indicating the various dimensions of the liberation process. We stress how the dimension of faith affects the political transformation within each system. In Chapter IV, we try to show the precise function of the imagination or utopian thinking within the process of liberation. In Chapter V, which is the key chapter, we try to determine how each model of liberation theology grounds its theory of faith in praxis. We ask the question whether, and to what extent, man's faith and his creative participation through the power of the imagination are necessary for the transformation of society. Since an empirical verification of the authenticity of a theological model can only be made in future history, we rely on an internal critique of the values constituting the respective liberation theologies. In the final chapter, we present our conclusions and general observations.

Biographical Sketches of Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann

Rubem Alves

Rubem Azevedo Alves was born in Brazil in 1933. Upon completion of his regular education, he attended the Seminário Teológico do Sul in Campinas, Brazil, and was ordained a minister in the Brazilian Presbyterian Church. He came to the United States for further studies in religion at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. After completing the Program of Advanced Religion Studies, Alves continued his studies at Union, receiving his master of arts degree in sacred theology. During his studies at Union, Alves worked under Paul Lehmann, whose ideas and ethical principles have greatly influenced his own research and writing.

In 1965 Alves entered Princeton Theological Seminary, where he studied under Charles C. West, Diogenes Allen, and M. Richard Shaull. He received his doctor of theology degree in 1968. Afterwards, he returned to Brazil, accepting a teaching position at the University of São Paulo as Professor of Philosophical Foundations of the Social Sciences. He was appointed Director of Studies of the Commission of Church and Society in Latin America. In 1970 he returned to Union Theological Seminary as a visiting professor, accepting the Harry Emerson Fosdick Chair for 1970-71. The following year he was named the Luce Visiting Professor of Ethics at Union. A member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, Alves is presently teaching and doing research in Brazil. He is married and is the father of two boys.

Gustavo Gutierrez

Gustavo Gutierrez-Merino was born in Lima, Peru, in 1928. He studied medicine for four years, receiving his bachelor of science degree from the National University of San Marcos in Lima. He then studied at the University of Louvain, where he first received a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy and subsequently a licentiate in psychology. From Louvain, Belgium, he moved to Lyon, France, where he began studies at the Faculty of Theology. While studying at Lyon, he came under the influence of Johannes B. Metz, whose political theology has had an important impact on him. Through Metz, Gutierrez became familiar with the writings of Karl Rahner, who was Metz' mentor in Germany. Rahner's influence on Gutierrez is seen in the latter's theology of secularization.

Gutierrez was ordained a priest in the Roman Catholic Church on June 1, 1959. At the present time he is national advisor for the National Union of Catholic Students (UNEC) of Peru and, consequently, comes into frequent contact with some of the most articulate and radical youth of Peru. He is a member of the National Directorate of the National Office of Social Information (ONIS). He is a professor in the Department of Theology in the Catholic University in Lima, where he offers courses in the Social Sciences Program on Marxist philosophy, theology of liberation, and Latin American Marxism. He is also professor in the Institute of Liturgical Pastoral in Medellin, Colombia, where in 1968 he served as a *peritus* in the Bishops' Conference. He is a member of the doctrinal reflection team of the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM).

Jürgen Moltmann

Jürgen Moltmann was born in Hamburg, Germany, on April 8, 1926. He finished his secondary education at the age of sixteen and was then inducted into the German army at the height of the Second World War. In 1944 he was taken prisoner by the British Armed Forces and incarcerated in a concentration camp in Scotland for three and a half years. His prison experience became a source for his faith and hope, as well as an inspiration for his later interest in political theology. Of his prison experience he writes: ". . . perhaps behind the barbed wire, we had discovered the power of a hope which sought something new, not merely a return to the old conditions."[20] After his release, he returned to Germany and began his theological studies at the University of Göttingen from 1948-52. At Göttingen he studied Luther's theology of the cross and dialectical theology, especially the systems of Barth and Kierkegaard. After being ordained a minister in the German Reformed Church in 1952, he continued as a student chaplain in Bremen until 1957. He then became a *Privatdozent* at the University of Göttingen. The following year he accepted a professorship at Wuppertal, where he taught at the *Kirchliche Hochschule*. Here he came into contact with Wolfhart Pannenberg, who joined the faculty in 1960. In 1963 he began teaching at the University of Bonn, and in 1967 at the University of Tübingen, where he is presently serving as professor of systematic theology and dean of the faculty of theology.

Moltmann traveled in the United States from September 1967 to April 1968, pivotally located at the Divinity School of Duke University, but visiting almost every major region of the nation and giving lectures on the theology of hope and political theology. He has an exhaustive number of publications, translated in many languages. His two most important books are *Theology of Hope* (1964) and *Der gekreuzigte Gott* (1972). He is married and has four children.

Notes

[1] Harvey Cox, *The Feast of Fools* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), pp. 82-83.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

[2] Dorothee Sölle, *Beyond Mere Obedience*, trans. with a preface by W. Deneff (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1968), p. 76.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[6] Rubem A. Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope* (New York: Corpus Books, 1969), pp. 122-123.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 166.

[8] Rubem A. Alves, *Tomorrow's Child* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

[9] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, trans. and ed. by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1973), p. 234.

[10] Gustavo Gutierrez, "Notes for a Theology of Liberation," *Theological Studies*, XXXI (June 1970), 254.

[11] Jürgen Moltmann, "Response to the Opening Presentations," *Hope and the Future of Man*, ed. by Ewert H. Cousins (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), pp. 56-57.

[12] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Play*, trans. by Reinhard Ulrich (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 12.

[13] Examples of recent theological investigations of the imagination not directly connected with liberation are: Ray Hart, *The Unfinished Man and the Imagination* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1968); Richard Rubenstein, *The Religious Imagination* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968); William F. Lynch, *Christ and Prometheus* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1970); William Dean, *Coming To: A Theology of Beauty* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972).

[14] "The Socioeconomic Structures of Peru," *Between Honesty and Hope*, a declaration by a group of priests in Peru, trans. by John Drury (Maryknoll, New York: Maryknoll Publications, 1969), p. 74.

[15] Dom Helder Camara, "Violence in the Modern World," *Between Honesty and Hope*, pp. 47-54.

[16] Jürgen Moltmann, "Freedom in the Light of Hope," *Japan Christian Quarterly*, XXXIX (Summer 1973), 154-155.

[17] Gustavo Gutierrez, "From the Colonial Church to Medellin," a working paper prepared for the 1970 CICOP Conference (Washington, D.C.: Division for Latin America, U.S.C.C., 1970), pp. 1-14.

[18] Camara, *Between Honesty and Hope*, p. 48.

[19] Richard J. Neuhaus, "Liberation Theology and the Captivities of Jesus," *Worldview*, XVI (June 1973), 41-48.

[20] Jürgen Moltmann, "Politics and the Practice of Hope," *The Christian Century*, LXXXVII (March 11, 1970), 288.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE MARXIST CRITIQUE OF RELIGION AND THEOLOGIANS' RESPONSE

Liberation: From the Idea to Praxis

In approaching the goal of the research--whether liberation theology with its two emphases on the imagination and on praxis adequately answers the Marxist critique of religion--it is necessary to begin historically with an investigation of the critique and with some earlier theological responses. To understand the critique of Marx and Engels demands not only some general background of Marxism, but also familiarity with the pertinent notions of Hegel, Bruno Bauer, and Feuerbach which relate both to the whole question of liberation and to the role of religion in this process. After reviewing these general notions, one is in a better position to evaluate the responses to the Marxist critique.

Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, and Reinhold Niebuhr are the respondents. These three have been selected for the following reasons: First, all are twentieth-century theologians who are familiar with, and somewhat sympathetic, although fundamentally opposed to Marx and Engels' view of the evolution of history and the liberation of mankind; second, these three have had a very great impact on Christian social thought in this century; third, their writings have had a direct formative influence on both Alves and Moltmann and an indirect influence on Gutierrez through Protestant liberation theologians. It is hoped that the responses of Barth, Tillich, and Niebuhr will draw the fundamental problem raised by the critique into sharper focus and clarify the faith dimension of liberation, setting it in contrast to the economic-political dimension of liberation on which Marx and Engels concentrate. Thus, we will have established from this dialogue a framework for discussing the multidimensional process of liberation, which includes the dynamics of faith and the political-economic praxis. We assume from the start that both realities contribute essentially to the liberating process of a people. In the light of these realities of faith and praxis, we may evaluate more effectively the contributions of the liberation theologians.

Hegel: Consciousness Determines Practice

According to Hegel, freedom alone is the goal toward which the history of man is moving. Within the chain of historical events, freedom is "the only principle which pervades the whole."[1] Man comes to possess freedom through an historical process involving a genesis of consciousness, a process in which the self-determination of individuals becomes incorporated into an ordered harmonious state conforming to man's reason. The process is dialectical, operating within three major historical phrases: The first phase is the consciousness of the object as a sensible thing standing over against the subject; the second is that of self-consciousness involving the presence of the other; the third is that of reason which is a synthesis of the two preceding phases of objectivity and subjectivity.

In the second historical phase, one becomes conscious of oneself "only by being acknowledged or recognized" by another consciousness.[2] This recognition is based upon the lord-bondsman dialectic engaged in a life-and-death struggle. History begins when the first fight between men results in one becoming the master and the other the slave. In this fight, each desires the death of the other in order to establish being for himself. But the fight ends in such a way that both master and slave remain alive. The master, because he was more willing to risk his life in order to obtain prestige and recognition, preferred something ideal (recognition) to the merely biological (existence). "And it is solely by risking life that freedom is obtained; only thus is it tried and proved that the essential nature of self-consciousness is not bare existence, . . ."[3] In the first moment of the dialectic called "affirmation," reason accepts the distinct idea of a master-slave relationship. The slave recognizes the victor as his master, submitting to his demands. By dominating the slave, the master indirectly dominates and transforms nature.

In the second moment of negation, reason negates the one-sidedness of this idea of freedom. It is the slave who directly transforms nature by means of his labor, and through this activity opens up the way to his own liberation.[4] While the master realizes his qualified freedom by overcoming his instinct to live in the fight, the slave obtains his limited freedom by working for another. Gradually the slave succeeds in dominating nature, thereby growing independent of the given natural conditions of existence. He transforms the conditions according to the idea that he has of himself, which he discovers in the active service of his master. As he becomes aware of that fact, he becomes conscious of his freedom and autonomy.[5] By using thought or reflection arising from his labor, the slave is able to formulate an abstract notion of freedom which negates the forced notion of freedom.

The contradiction between the two notions of freedom is overcome in the third moment of the dialectic called "reconciliation" or the "negation of the negation." The contradiction is this. While the slave experiences his own integrity and freedom, the master does not recognize it. At the same time the master comes to realize that he does not possess an independent and essential self-consciousness because his freedom is recognized only by the slave, whom he does not recognize as a real person. For this reason, his freedom never satisfies him. The master who risked his life to achieve a spiritual ideal discovers that the essential nature of the ideal is the reverse of what he had hoped.[6]

The truth of liberation lies in bondage, that is, with the slave. Because the slave has an advantage over his master in having formulated an ideal of essential freedom in his labor, he begins to impose his idea of freedom on the master in order to acquire recognition. The slave convinces him that the mutual recognition will give the definitive satisfaction to the master that he otherwise would never attain.[7] This reconciliation represents the historical period of history called stoic consciousness that places an individual's freedom, integrity, and love of truth over his position in society. In this period, the lord or king and the slave respect the other's freedom and personal autonomy.

As the historical dialectic involving the fight between the lord and slave continues, the stoic notion of consciousness becomes the new thesis, which itself must be questioned and eventually negated. Stoicism is negated by skeptical consciousness, which challenges the stoic values of knowledge, integrity, and freedom. Stoicism and skepticism are in turn reconciled in a synthesis called "the unhappy consciousness," which asserts that the real values of Christianity are realized finally in the future life.

The last of these periods is completed when the difference and opposition between master and slave stops. At this point both are free of "alienation" (*Entfremdung*).[8] Man, who had been alienated from other men, the state, wealth, and religion, appropriates his essential forces which had become alien objects. The appropriation takes place through dialectical thinking, that is, within man's consciousness of himself where contradictions are tran-

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scended. Through his reason (*Vernunft*), man arrives at a higher unity, or synthesis. The final and highest state is the level of morality in which the person is a self-contained spiritual subject, who is a completely self-determining will, having the world within itself and itself within the world.[9]

Marx: Practice Determines Consciousness

Liberation and Praxis

When Marx broke with the Hegelian method and system, he retained some important notions from Hegel. One cannot fail to notice the close parallel between Marx' description of the bourgeois-proletariat class struggle and Hegel's lord-bondsman dialectic. Second, within Hegel's dialectic, the stage called the "unhappy consciousness," which stresses the values of the future life over those of the present, has a parallel in Marx' critique of religion as alienation and "false consciousness." Third, the activity of labor in both systems assists man in attaining self-realization, but labor in Hegel's system becomes absorbed by the theoretical. Both Hegel and Marx recognize the importance of the Idea (theory) and praxis (labor) in overcoming alienation in individuals and in institutions. But they differ in the importance each gives to thought and to praxis.

For Hegel, alienation is overcome as men become more conscious of themselves and as institutions develop according to the order of reason. Marx objects to Hegel's emphasis that alienation and the overcoming of alienation occurs in rational thought. He expresses this difference with his mentor in the following passage from *The German Ideology*.

> It [the conception of history] does not explain practice by the idea but explains the formation of ideas by material practice. Accordingly it comes to the result that all forms and products of consciousness can be dissolved not by spiritual criticism, not by dissolution in "self-consciousness," or transformation into "phantoms," "ghosts," "freaks," etc., but by the practical overthrow of the real social relations which gave rise to these idealistic humbugs; that not criticism but revolution is the motive force of history as well as of religion, philosophy and all other forms of theory.[10]

Reason, according to Marx, is inherent in man's sensuous activity, that is, in labor and political praxis and not in the abstract idea. Revolution of social structures, not the genesis of consciousness, is the motive force of the liberation of man.

Marx reverses the dialectic of Hegel by standing it on its head. Consciousness, or the Idea, does not determine reality, but the real world determines consciousness. Genuine thought is not useless or unimportant, but it is rooted in sense perception and in the activity of men. "Hegel turns man into the man of consciousness, instead of turning consciousness into the consciousness of real men, living in the real world."[11] Reason exists in the world, although often not expressed in rational form.

> The critic, therefore, can start with any form of theoretical and practical consciousness and develop the true actuality out of the forms *inherent* in existing actuality as its ought-to-be and goal. As far as actual life is concerned, the *political state* especially contains in all its modern forms the demands of reason, even where the political state is not yet conscious of socialistic demands. . . . We develop new principles for the world out of the principles of the world.[12]

Marx distinguishes here between reason which is inherent in the world in an unformulated or even unconscious form and that reason which has been consciously formulated into principles. In both cases, reason develops out of the world, and not abstractly in the mind of man. The "ought-to-be" state is not a figment of man's imagination, nor a product of his will, but is grounded in existing actuality. According to Marx, Hegel's dialectical method assumes that the thinking process is the "demiurgos of the real world" and that the real world is the external and phenomenal form of the idea. The dialectic for Marx is its direct opposite. "The ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought."[13]

In summary, one can see the importance that each of these two views has with respect to the liberation of man.

In the Hegelian view of "praxis," the changing of men's consciousness will bring about a change in the reality itself. In the Marxist view of praxis, one must come to an understanding of the material forces which determine history. The expression of the operation of these forces in the form of a theory makes it possible for man to become actively engaged in transforming those conditions within society which alienate man. We now examine the role that religion plays in the transformation of society and the manner in which Marx and Engels criticize that role.

Liberation and Religion

In the last phase of the historical dialectic within Hegel's system, the movement of the spirit toward freedom involves the secularization of the Christian ideal. His continual use of Christian categories does not imply an acceptance of the Christian belief in the incarnation, death, and resurrection. These Christian myths are more suggestive of his own philosophy than are the myths of other religions.[14] The truths of religions, including those of Christianity, become identified with the truth of philosophy. Christianity is not something unique, but simply a stage or moment in the history of the world.

Bruno Bauer, one of the most influential of the

Young Hegelians, argues that religion is an obstacle to progress and to the development of consciousness. On the question of the emancipation of the Jews in Germany, Bauer contends that their political emancipation and the emancipation of Christians demand that both groups give up religious privileges.

> Every religious privilege, including the monopoly of a privileged church, would have to be abolished, and if a few or many or even the overwhelming majority still felt obliged to fulfill their religious duties, such a practice should be left to them as a purely private matter. . . . There is no longer any religion if there is no privileged religion. Take from religion its power of excommunication and it ceases to exist.[15]

For Bauer, political emancipation is the freeing of the citizen from religion by relegating it to the sphere of private right. The Jews will never be politically emancipated, he says, unless they radically free themselves from Judaism.

Bauer errs, according to Marx, in confusing political emancipation and universal human emancipation. Even if religion were to be reduced to the private lives of the citizens who could no longer claim any office or privilege on the basis of religion, man would continue to experience alienation because he has not achieved community in his everyday life and work. The reality is that the political state remains apart from the civil society (the sphere of the individual) in which the state dominates the individual. Full human and universal emancipation can take place when and only when "he has recognized and organized his own powers as social powers so that social force is no longer separated from him as political power. . . ."[16] In brief, the abolishing of religion from the state realm does not get to the root of the alienation.

Feuerbach, while recognizing man's basic alienation as originating in traditional religion, originally set out to understand religion, not to abolish it.[17] The religion and theology he attacks in his *Essence of Christianity* is the old religion, in which its objects of worship and devotion are fetishistic expressions of human emotion.[18] Like Hegel and Bauer, Feuerbach is interested in man's achieving human freedom by overcoming alienation. But in opposition to both philosophers, he holds that religion does not arise from the need of reason to understand but from the human needs and wants of the heart. In Feuerbach's writings, one already finds the reversal of the Hegelian dialectic, which Marx and Engels later adopt. The idea, according to Feuerbach, reflects the concrete world of man and not vice versa. For Hegel, the entire material world is alienated from man's consciousness and is eventually reconciled with man's spirit as man becomes more aware of himself and of the rationality in the world.

In all religious experience and worship, man projects (alienates) some element of human experience into an object of worship, an idea which man calls God. Arguing that the secret of religion is concrete man and that the affective and emotional life of man is the root of religion, he tries to show that all the predicates and attributes of God are identical with the attributes of man. Therefore, the divine nature and the human nature are essentially the same. The old theology, with its rational analysis, negates human senses and emotions, classifying the objects of man's sensible and emotional needs as foreign mysteries.

> But I by no means say (that were an easy task!): God is nothing, the Trinity is nothing, the Word of God is nothing, etc. I only show that they are not *that* which the illusions of theology make them,--not foreign, but native mysteries, the mysteries of human nature; I show that religion takes the apparent, the superficial in Nature and humanity for the essential, and hence conceives their true essence as a separate, special existence: that consequently, religion, in the definitions which it gives of God, are not negative in the sense above alluded to,--only defines or makes objective the true nature of the human word.[19]

The essence of the new theology is anthropology, and the mark of the new religion is both the recognition and renunciation of the alienating tendencies of traditional religion and "the open confession, that the consciousness of God is nothing else than the consciousness of the species."[20]

Marx and Engels were indebted to Feuerbach for his discovery that traditional religion is the alienation of man from himself, that is, the unconscious projection of his human nature into objects of worship. What follows from this projection is the creation of an objective norm which claims a priori validity. From this they argued that the religious principles are imbedded in all of society as a projection of the unconscious. Once projected into absolute ethical, economic, or political absolutes, these religious principles establish a dualism in society: between the sacred and the profane, the clerical and lay states, and between theoretical equality of all citizens under the law and the practical toleration of discriminatory differences between different classes.[21] The dualism arises because, while man continually changes in his needs and desires, the projected creation of the unconscious becomes frozen in absolute principles, which are then an abstraction from the way man is in his everyday world. Seeing the extension of this phenomenon of unconscious projection from religion to politics, ethics, and economics, Marx states that "the criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism."[22]

While acknowledging Feuerbach's insight that it is man who makes religion and not vice versa, Marx and Engels criticize him for failing to go far enough. In his "Theses on Feuerbach," Marx says: "Once the Earthly Family is discovered to be the secret of the Holy Family, the former must itself be criticized in theory and revolutionized in practice."[23] Marx credits Feuerbach for moving beyond the idealism of Hegel and Bauer in his thesis that all religion can be reduced to anthropology. Yet Feuerbach only contemplates single individuals in civil society, failing to understand that the world must be changed by practical activity. Therefore, Marx makes essentially the same criticism against Feuerbach as he did against Bauer; namely, that he fails to understand that human liberation can be realized only when man organizes his social forces to restructure all of society.

Human Liberation Through Praxis

Alienation in Labor

The issue for Marx regarding liberation is human freedom, not an abstract principle nor a supernatural or transcendental ideal. In opposing the idea of his mentor Hegel, his contemporaries, and the Christian churches, Marx explains what liberation is *not* and what it actually *is*. It is not a transformation of consciousness through thinking, or through a dogmatic principle, or through the imagination.

> The phantoms of their brains have gained the mastery over them. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creatures. Let us liberate them from the chimeras, the ideas, dogmas, imaginary beings under the yoke of which they are pining away. Let us revolt against the rule of thoughts.[24]

Nor is the liberation of man brought about by abolishing religion as the Young Hegelians in different ways tried to demonstrate. True radical liberation is effected through praxis, which is not merely a new theoretical attitude, as Feuerbach suggests, but revolutionary activity which transforms things on behalf of social needs of people.[25] Praxis, as Marx and Engels use the term, involves more than practicality. It is a specific kind of behavior or activity in technology, economic production, scientific experiment and research, revolutionary class struggle and artistic creation.[26]

For Marx and Engels, it is not a question of placing action over theory, for they insist throughout their writings that theory and praxis must move together. Theory is a guide to action; practice is the activity which tests the theory. "The question whether human thought can achieve objective truth is not a question of theory but a *practical* question. In praxis man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality, power, and this-sidedness of his thought."[27]

The basis of Marxist theory of revolutionary change through praxis is grounded in the nature of man. Man's existence is manifested by his activity. "As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their productions, both with *what* they produce and with *how* they produce."[28] It is a reversal of the scholastic principle *Agere sequitur esse* to *Esse sequitur agere*. Existence follows action. Marx does not, however, identify man's actions with his *essential* being. Man's existence, expressed in egoistic activity, is alienated from his own essence; man is not actually what he potentially is.[29] In contrast to the political economist, Adam Smith, who conceives of man's nature as being egoistic, Marx holds that modern man is *de facto* egoistic because of capitalistic, alienated society. But to identify the nature of man with the concrete man of any given historical period is to commit the "ideological fallacy" of equating the part with the whole.[30] Marx sets forth what man essentially is under the general rubric of alienation.

The root source of alienation is expressed in work and in the division of labor. Man becomes alienated from the product of his labor, from the work process, from his species-being, and from other men.[31] The product of man's labor is something external to him; it is not a part of his nature. Consequently, he does not feel himself being fulfilled in producing it. The object produced stands opposed to him as an alien being. The object becomes a means of capital, which in the hands of the owner dominates and exploits him. Moreover, his activity of labor does not provide an opportunity for him to freely develop his mental and physical energies. It is foreign activity, leaving him with "a feeling of misery rather than well-being . . . physically exhausted and mentally debased." Man's work becomes forced labor, another's activity, and so man's functions are reduced to that of an animal.[32] In functioning as an animal in his labor, man becomes alienated from his species-being. As a species-being, man possesses free, conscious activity, able to distinguish the activity from himself. But alienated labor changes this relationship. Man's activity is reduced to the means to satisfy a need, to keep himself alive. Finally, man becomes estranged from other men, regarding them according to standards imposed on him by the work. In all four aspects of this fundamental alienation, man's existence is not what he essentially is; a free, creative being who has a multiplicity of needs and powers subject to change and development. New needs follow upon the satisfaction of old needs. The realization of these needs is the realization of freedom.[33] In other words, man is liberated by affirming his human limitation in the fulfillment of his needs. He is not liberated by trying to transcend them nor by being denied the possibility of fulfilling them. Productive activity imposed by the demands of his nature is liberating; productive activity imposed from the outside by egoistic desire is alienating.

The cause of man's alienation is social. It is due to the political and economic structures of capitalistic society. If man's alienation is brought about through his activity of work, his liberation, too, is realized by transforming this activity. Marx discusses the factors involved in man's social production in the following passage.

> In the social production which men carry on, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will--these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society--the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the

> contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.[34]

This passage is packed with the essential technical terms of Marx' economic theory: material powers of production, relations of production, real foundation, and superstructure. The material powers of production, often called the productive forces, are the basic determinants in the economy, which change over the ages due to technological advancement. Examples are the bow and arrow, gunpowder, and the steam engine. The relations of production are the mutual relations of men with each other in the process of production, the conditions of exchange, and the distribution of material goods.[35] The relations of production and the material powers of production constitute the mode of production. The mode of production makes up the real foundation or infrastructure. The infrastructure determines the superstructure, which has two levels in Marxist theory: Superstructure I consists of the juridical and political conditions; superstructure II consists of the forms of social consciousness, or the ideological forms. These are the political, economic, philosophical, religious theories and doctrines. The relation of these factors can be better visualized in Figure 1. Thus, Marx' principle at the end of the last quotation, "Social existence determines their

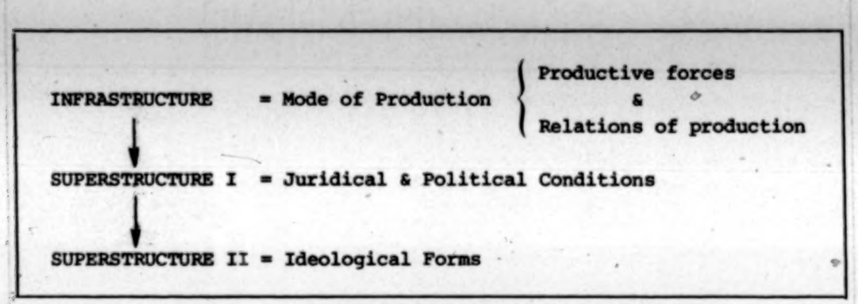
INFRASTRUCTURE = Mode of Production
Productive forces & Relations of production
SUPERSTRUCTURE I = Juridical & Political Conditions
SUPERSTRUCTURE II = Ideological Forms

Fig. 1. Relationship of Infrastructure to Superstructure

consciousness," expressed in more technical language means that the mode of production determines the ideological forms.

At certain stages of historical development, there arises a conflict within the infrastructure between the productive forces and the relations of production. A technological advance in machinery eliminates the need for certain kinds of labor, with the result that the relations between capitalist and worker change. A period of revolution ensues in which the economic foundation is radically transformed. Accompanying this transformation is the change of the superstructure. From a surface view, it might seem that man's changing viewpoint and new awareness are responsible for the revolution. Marx refutes this objection in his *Critique of Political Economy*.

> In considering such transformations, the distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic--in short, ideological--forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge such a period of transformation by its own consciousness--on the contrary, this consciousness must rather be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production.[36]

The basic point here is that the economic institutions of society (infrastructure) form the basis upon which all other institutions are formed. The other institutions, although they have influence over the former, are fundamentally reflections of the social relations of production. Whenever the economic system undergoes a revolutionary change, the other institutions change correspondingly, rationalizing the system "by justifying it in law, protecting it in politics, rooting it in philosophy, and idealizing it in art."[37]

The social relations of production determine the division of classes within a society, such as lords, vassals, guild masters, journeymen, and serfs in the feudal structure; the bourgeoisie and proletariat in the modern capitalistic society. In the latter stage, the bourgeois class maintains its superior status by constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production. The proletarian class, experiencing the feeling of misery in its labor, is intent on revolutionizing the entire system by abolishing private property and destroying the class structure. The laborer understands that alienation can be abolished and that his true nature can be realized by bringing about a universal and propertyless community. This entails that all people throughout the world must be without private capital and that the productive forces must be developed in such a way that they are able to satisfy the natural needs of the people. As this universal development of productive forces is realized, there will be universal intercourse between men.[38]

Liberation and Ideology

Ideology, says Karl Mannheim, has two distinct meanings: a particular and the total.[39] The particular conception of ideology is that it is a more or less conscious disguise of the true situation, operating according to a psychology of interests. The total conception calls into question the opponent's total world view. The common element in both conceptions is that one cannot rely on what is actually said to get to the truth of the situation, but must analyze the social conditions and interests of the subject. According to Mannheim, Marx was the first to join these two conceptions in his notion of ideology by giving emphasis both to political practice and to the economic position of a class. According to Marx, the class which controls the means of production controls the ideas of the whole society, justifying its political and economic policies by ideology.

> The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that in consequence, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are, in general, subject to it. The dominant ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, and dominant material relationships grasped as ideas, and thus of the relationships which make one class the ruling one--they are consequently the ideas of its dominance.[40]

The ruling class glorifies its own values by expressing them as the ideals of the whole society, while depreciating the values of the other groups who aspire to power. Thus, the conscious thought is most often a mask concealing the real situation; it is ideology.

Such is religious sentiment and the doctrine of the churches, according to Marx. Since religious ideology is a social product, one must dig down deeply to reach its roots. Feuerbach's search resulted in the discovery that religious sentiment is rooted in man and that it is this sentiment that causes the alienation in him. Marx says that religion is only the symptom, not the cause of man's profound estrangement. It is true that religion as an ideology justifies the position of the dominant class and tries to console the oppressed workers in their misery. But the solution does not lie in eliminating religion. Unmasking this form of "false consciousness" is insufficient. The first step is to find out what the perversion is in man's social being that led him to find this distortion attractive.[41] Marx' study shows that in all societies, primitive and modern, religion rises out of alienation. In the primitive society, the source of alienation is the forces of nature; in modern societies it is commodities or capital. But knowledge of the sources of alienation is only the first step. Man, who is the cause of his own alienation, is also the vehicle by which it is removed.[42]

How can man liberate himself from this alien power which enslaves him? Engels says that the revolutionary process must be a social act in which society "by taking possession of all means of production and using them on a planned basis, frees itself and its members from the slavery by the bourgeois means of production. . . .[43] When this radical revolution takes place, only then will religion disappear because the root source, which is the capitalistic system, will have been eliminated. The revolution begins with a seizing of political power by the proletariat, which then turn the means of production over to the state. This occurs first on the national level and subsequently on the international level.[44] Once the proletariat become the dictator, all class distinctions are abolished and all class antagonisms dissolve. "The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production."[45] With the socialization of the means of production, it is possible for the first time for man to overcome his alienation.

> Man's own social organization, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action. . . . Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history--only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of freedom.[46]

This passage written by Engels in 1880 is asserting that man, once he is liberated and lives within a classless society, is free and thus able to shape history. As the anarchy in social production decreases, the authority of the state decreases and eventually ceases to exist.

Summary

It would be good to summarize the important Marxist notions of alienation, ideology, praxis, and freedom. The main issue is that of human liberation. For Marx, human liberation is not simply a matter of transforming human consciousness (Hegel). Nor is it realized through a complete destruction of religion (Strauss and Bauer). Finally, human liberation is not a matter of unmasking religion and correspondingly accepting it as anthropology (Feuerbach). Against the idealism of the Hegelians, Marx and Engels maintain that ideas are *true* to the extent that they embody real interests and needs of people. In opposition to both the Hegelians and to Feuerbach, Marx maintains that ideas are *helpful* toward human liberation insofar as they lead to praxis. Thus, Feuerbach, like Hegel and Bauer, remains a theorist by failing to see that truth is practical, demanding revolutionary change (praxis).

For Marx and Engels, ideas and theories which remain separated from praxis are ideologies. Ideology signifies a false consciousness of social and economic realities. This phenomenon exists wherever a society based on class structure exists. Ideology is false because, even though it may correspond to the ideas of the ruling class, it fails to account for the needs and interests of the masses of people. Since the ideas of the ruling class dominate and alienate, a class society will always be supported by an ideology in economics, politics, and religion, which justifies the existing political-economic structure and alienates the masses. Religion, as part of the ideology, disappears with the abolition of the class structure.

The question of freedom versus determinism in the Marxist philosophy of man is a very complex one, the discussion of which would take us beyond the scope of this research. However, a few summary ideas would be helpful.

In the first place, while the Marxist man is no voluntarist, neither is he someone completely determined in a mechanistic world. He possesses both an active power to act on his environment and a receptive power that is acted upon by the environment. "If man is shaped by his surroundings, his surroundings must be made human."[47] Just as man cannot be changed without transforming the world, neither can the world be transformed without man's practical activity. Hence, freedom for Marx and Engels would at least include the element of man's ability to change himself and his environment.

In the second place, man is a *social* being, and, therefore, his transforming acitivity is fundamentally social activity. The social nature of man seems to be the primary quality of what it means to be human and free in Marxist thought. People need each other. Their personal and social freedom comes about through community.

> Only in community [with others has each] individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions; only in the community, therefore, is personal freedom possible. . . . In a real community the individuals obtain their freedom in and through their association.[48]

An individual cannot become free in isolation from other men, but only in community.

Man's social nature arises from the fact that man produces in a social manner. Through his labor, man is united with others. In a capitalistic society, the division of labor isolates the laborer from himself and from others. Therefore, he must begin to assert himself as a free individual by uniting with other workers to abolish the very conditions which alienate his existence.

Finally, man's freedom is a function of the inner laws of production operating in the world. All men act with deliberation or passion in trying to achieve definite goals. However, these desired ends often conflict with one another so that the conscious purpose of the individuals is rarely realized. Engels summarizes this aspect of man's freedom in this way.

> The ends of the actions are intended, but the results which actually follow from these actions are not intended, or when they do seem to correspond to the end intended they ultimately have consequences quite other

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> than those intended. Historical events thus appear on the whole to be likewise governed by chance. But where on the surface accident holds sway, there actually it is always governed by inner, hidden laws, and it is only a matter of discovering these laws.[49]

The inner, hidden laws are the laws of production and historical materialism. To those unacquainted with these laws, it appears that events happen quite opposite to the way man intended. Yet a pattern or law is in operation, as Marx and Engels maintain in *The Communist Manifesto*. The bourgeois class, in trying to revolutionize the means of production to maintain its own position of power, sounds its own death knell. As it develops industry, the need increases for the help of other workers and the competition between workers increases. Eventually the workers organize to protect themselves against the bourgeois capitalists. Thus, the bourgeois class unwittingly brings the proletariat together by promoting wage labor, which increases the competition between laborers. The laborers then unite to fight and eventually overthrow the class system. In short, the freedom of man is enhanced by discovering the laws at work in history and by working in accordance with them to overcome the capitalist society.

In attempting to shed light on the freedom-determinism question, we have mentioned three elements that seem to us to be essential. The fundamental proposition is that man's freedom is a function of his social nature. Individuals isolated from one another are not truly free. As a united community, people have the power to act in such a manner as to remove the conditions of alienation and exploitation. At the same time, Marx and Engels insist that the laws of production are *the* determining factor in man's existence and in the whole of history. The economic structure determines the superstructure, and not conversely. Without attempting to draw any final conclusion, we tentatively hold, on the basis of the dialectical relationship between man's praxis (his active power of self-determination and transformation) and the inner laws of production, that the Marxist philosophy of man is not a completely deterministic one, but a philosophy that makes room for man's free and purposeful participation in the development of the whole person.

Theological Responses to Marxism: Liberation Without Ideology

Having briefly surveyed the notions of liberation in Hegel, Feuerbach, Bauer, and Marx, and having dealt with the radical nature of the Marxist revolution and Marx' attack upon all forms of ideology, especially religious ideology, one can now turn to the respondents, who take up Marx' critique of ideology, and the role that religion has played in forming a false consciousness in society. In order to keep the problem in focus and the discussion within manageable limits, the following questions will serve as guideposts: First, how does each theologian respond to Marx' criticism that religion (and Christian communities) is the opium of the people? By "opium," Marx means the kind of preaching and doctrine which serves as a narcotic for the pain of the oppressed and as a justification for the oppressive practice of the dominating class. Second, how does each theologian explain the liberation of man in such a way that his theology does not itself become another ideology? Evaluation of each man's response immediately follow the general discussion.

Karl Barth: Freedom Through Obedient Response to the Word of God

Response to Marx

Barth's direct response to Marx' challenge occurs in only two of his writings. The first is found in a lecture on Feuerbach given at Münster in 1926, in which he correctly interprets Feuerbach's philosophy as the springboard for Marx' criticism of Hegelian philosophy and of all religion.[50] The second source consists of five pages in *Church Dogmatics* in which he concisely and accurately summarizes historical materialism and gives a critique of it.[51] In both works, written approximately 22 years apart, Barth acknowledges the poverty of Christian theology in Marx' day, accepts the validity of Feuerbach's and Marx' criticism of the church, and finally criticizes Feuerbach and Marx for raising their own theory to the level of an ideology. These three points, which form the substance of Barth's response to the Marxist critique, we shall examine in order.

Regarding the inadequacy of Christian theology, Barth notes two areas where it was especially weak, and which consequently by its own failures indirectly supported the rise of Feuerbachian and Marxist theories, and at the same time opened itself up for their devastating attack. The first area where theology was weak was in its subjective, pietistic, and anthropological tendencies which stressed religion "as a conditioning of the self-consciousness of man in which he feels himself absolutely dependent in such a way that the whence of this feeling, that is God, is 'given' in this feeling 'in an original way.'"[52] Barth is referring to the theologies of Schleiermacher, Wegscheider, De Wette, and others who overemphasized the subjective state of man to such an extent that religion came dangerously close to becoming anthropology.[53] Feuerbach, concerned with the whole man--his spiritual and physical life together--tried to unify these elements which academic theology had separated. He was encouraged in this endeavor by the human and rationalistic elements in Christian theology.

Because of these factors, Feuerbach was led to the logical question, whether religion were not the worship of man in all his qualities and perfections. His answer, as has already been noted, is affirmative. The essence of "God" is the essence of man.

In addition to the theology of the day, Feuerbach's anthropologizing of religion was given further impetus by the affinity of his teaching with the thinking of the workers' socialist movement. Feuerbach wanted to unmask and overthrow all the idols, powers, and forces which the unenlightened man felt dependent upon. At the same time, the workers were trying to abolish the capitalist right of private ownership and to get back their deserved profits and tools which they felt were justly theirs. The common element in Feuerbach's teaching and the workers' striving was that both experienced a burdening and alienating dependence on some outside force. The Christian church, unable to read the signs of the times, took the side of the bourgeoisie, who were securely and comfortably perched in their nest of idealist philosophy.[54]

The second area where theology was weak was in its doctrine of soul and body. Here the church stressed a dualism in which the soul and body are connected essentially but as two parts and viewed as self-contained and qualitatively different substances. The first is "spiritual, non-spatial, indissoluble, and immortal," while the second is "material, spatial, dissoluble, and mortal." This doctrine stressed the immortality of the soul over the proclamation of the resurrection of the dead and the judgment and promise of God which encompass the whole man. It failed to mention that man and his destiny cannot be understood exclusively either from the material and economic viewpoint or from the spiritual viewpoint. "Man is wholly and simultaneously soul and body."[55]

Marx labeled the dualistic conception of body and soul an ideology because it supported the established class system. He found the doctrine of soul and body proposed by the monistic materialists to be not only useful but indispensable in the working out of his theory of historical materialism. Materialism is a doctrine which teaches that the real is that which is corporeal, spatial, physical, and material, and that which lacks these properties is imagination, illusion, or an epiphenomenon of the material causes.[56] According to Barth, this doctrine was incorporated into the Marxist theory which held that the body is related to the soul as economic development is to ideological phenomena. Thus, it was deduced that the soul is material because it is materially conditioned, a deduction that is faulty in its logic, but which nonetheless formed the basis of Marx' principle that consciousness, or the nonmaterial, is a product of the material forces of society.[57]

In saying that Marx' use of the materialist ideology was "indispensable" to his theory, Barth is asserting that historical materialism is not independent of ideological forms and that the latter do indeed significantly affect the "inner laws."[58] For if the laws of historical materialism were independent of these forms no adoption of a doctrine of body and soul would be necessary. Barth is quite correct in his perception of the existence and the importance of ideology in Marxism. At the same time, one is hesitant in accepting his theological explanation that the materialistic doctrine of soul and body was an indispensable and necessary ideology for Marx' theory. Marx was not concerned about a doctrine of soul and body--materialistic or otherwise. It is true that his theory is not inconsistent with the materialistic doctrine. But Barth cites no evidence from the writings of Marx and Engels to support his conviction.

The second point examines the validity of Marx' attack on the churches of the day. That the German church of the nineteenth century was not innocent of the charge layed upon it by Feuerbach and Marx is regretfully conceded by Barth.

> When the masses fell victim first to economic and then to the related pseudo-scientific materialism, as though they had become accustomed to hear from the Church of the day only irrelevant middle-class ideology; and when the dismayed Christian world could do little more than complain and scold in face of double defection, was not this the penalty for the fact quite unthinkingly, and certainly, and certainly not in obedience but in disobedience to Scripture, it had prescribed that abstract dualism of soul and body . . . ?[59]

In the face of the Marxist doctrine and the pseudoscientific theory, Barth admits that the church had nothing to say, and it never would unless it were to change radically its anthropology in the light of its eschatology. The church has by no means paid its debt. It should humbly accept the stinging criticism as a penalty for its irresponsibility and as an incentive to purify and renew itself.

The third and final point in Barth's analysis of Feuerbach and Marx has already been mentioned in connection with the church's doctrine of soul and body; namely, the theories of both men contain an ideology which makes man, the proletariat, and science the center of their doctrine. Their insight that all man's formulations fail to capture the truth and are tainted with an ideology applies to Feuerbach and Marx as well as to the Hegelians, theologians, and churches. All man-centered theories are ideologies, according to Barth. Even the revolutionary who sets out to overthrow the ideology which justifies an oppressive system will fail to achieve true revolution. He will fail precisely because he presumes to be right over against his neighbor and eventually sets up an order more tyrannical than the former state of affairs.[60] "Far more than the conservative, the revolutionary is *overcome of evil*, because with his 'No' he stands so strangely near to God."[61]

Liberation Without Ideology

How is man liberated without himself falling into an ideological trap which ensnared not only the Hegelians, the nineteenth-century theologians, but Marx as well? In conceding to Feuerbach and Marx that nineteenth-century theology supported and justified the capitalist system, Barth suggests the direction that Christian theology must take.

> If only the Church had been compelled before Marx to show in word and action, and had been able to show, that it is just the knowledge of God which automatically and inevitably includes within itself liberation from all hypotheses and idols, which of itself can achieve liberation![62]

The key words are "word" and "action" and "knowledge of God." For Barth, "to show in word" is to preach the Word of God, which presupposes a knowledge of God. Such knowledge is a gift of faith. And "to show in action" means to obediently respond to the Word. This in capsule form is the way to true liberation, the way which frees all men from ideologies, which Barth calls "hypostases" and "idols." A church which understood this could have effectively argued that Marx was himself an ideologue who turned Feuerbach's man-made-God into the proletariat-made-God and who hypostasized science and the material forces. The only effective way to refute Feuerbach's claim and Marx' critique, says Barth, is to show in word and action "that man's relation with God is in every respect an irreversible relation."[63] In other words, religion begins with the action of God and not with man.

How does man become liberated, how does he become a free person? Barth insists that freedom, given to man at his creation, is not the ability of man to choose between good and evil, but the capacity to recognize and praise the divine command by concrete action.[64] Freedom, while it is expressed in an obedient response to God's Word, is more than the simple execution of a command uttered by God; it consists primarily in man's offering himself to God in his free action.[65] Because of his disobedience, however, man becomes unable to choose that which he would like and is unable to act in accordance with the law of God, which are one and the same. Enslaved in his autocratic and godless state, he is unable to be liberated apart from the redeeming action of Christ.[66] All human attempts fail. Man is under the divine judgment for disobeying God's law. But the Gospel of Jesus Christ liberates man from the law which convicted him of sin. Redeemed by the grace of the Spirit, he may now "depend on Him in an imperturbable clarity and truth. It [God's grace] gives us the Spirit of love for Him who is the fulfillment of the law."[67] Liberation, or sanctification, therefore is an action of God in which He both condemns and acquits man, thus freeing man for eternal life. Man is then set free to do good acts, the goodness of which depends upon hearing the Word of God and acting accordingly.[68] In this obedient action man realizes himself.

Once liberated, the task of the community of Christians is to proclaim the kingdom of God, announcing that the Lord Jesus is the Lord of the world. Its mission is to win others for this kingdom through its proclamation.[69] The church of Jesus Christ is not to present a blueprint or program of social reform or a Christian manifesto. Barth's reason is consistent with the answer he gives to Marx and Feuerbach. To engage in social reform programs is to engage in ideology. One who is caught up in a human project attempts to live without God.

Barth's theology in all its simplicity is quite radical. The motivating force behind all of man's actions is the Word of God. To disregard God's will is to stray from the truth and to engage in ideology. At the same time, one wonders whether such a theology might not lead to a withdrawal from the social problems within society. Barth says that it does not. The mission to proclaim the Gospel engages man in bearing witness to God in the world, bearing witness to the truth, and being willing to accept other people. But the mission forbids granting a special status to any social group which would serve as a mediator of God's will. This applies, according to Barth, both to the church and to the state. Both social structures have the responsibility of redemption, although the church has the greater responsibility in this regard. The function of the state is to safeguard the freedom of the Christian to proclaim the Gospel. Barth explains the role of the state vis-à-vis the church in the following passage:

> Why does the community need "a quiet and peaceable life?" It needs it because in its own way, and in its own place, it likewise needs the preacher and apostle for all, and because it needs freedom in the realm of all men in order to exercise its function towards all men. But this freedom can only be guaranteed to it through the existence of the earthly state which ordains that all men shall live together in concord.[70]

As for the responsibility of the church toward the state, the church's duties consist primarily in exhortation and prayers. It is to remind the state of its responsibility toward God, from whom it receives its authority to govern and to whom it must answer for its responsibility to uphold justice for all.

Can the community of Christians proclaim an ideal form of state or criticize another for being tyrannical? On this point, Barth seems to be inconsistent. Referring to the communist state in the following passage, he apparently rules out the radical opposition to any form of government.

> It [the church] can accompany every political system. But it cannot serve strange gods. It cannot therefore ally itself with any political system, old or new, for better or for worse, just as it cannot oppose any system unconditionally. It can offer absolute and abstract obedience or resistance to none but to each only

> the relative concrete obedience or resistance which it is commanded by the Word of God.[71]

And yet in his earlier attack on Nazism, he opposed Hitler's state unconditionally. In exhorting others to assist in the resistance, Barth writes: "No friend can be dearer than one who helps us in this ministry, no foe more hateful than he that wants to hinder us in this ministry."[72] Barth's apparent inconsistency is this: On the one hand, he calls on the Christian church to oppose one form of government, that of National Socialism; on the other hand, he argues against the church's opposition to communism. Both systems of government are not only intolerant of religion but oppose any public proclamation of the Gospel. In reply to his critics, Barth argues that even though communism is atheistic, it is not as destructive or harmful to the faith as Nazism was.

> Communism, as distinguished from Nazism, has not done, and by its nature cannot do one thing: it has never made the slightest attempt to reinterpret or to falsify Christianity, or to shroud itself in a Christian garment. It has never committed the basic crime of the Nazis, the removal and replacement of the real Christ by a national Jesus, and it has never committed the crime of anti-semitism. There is nothing of the false prophet about it.[73]

Two criteria are given in this reply: The first is that Nazism exploits Christianity by pretending to embody Christian values; the second is that Nazism has committed the heinous crime of genocide.

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These criteria are not clearly inconsistent with his fundamental principle. In both exploiting the Christian faith and in persecuting the Jews, Nazism violated the Word of God and hindered those who spoke out against these crimes. Hence, there was a greater danger to the faith because Nazism pretended to claim an authority over men which is God's alone. In effect it arrogated the religious role of the church. It urged Christians to identify their faith with the state, which, by masquerading as a religion, became a "strange god."[74] Therefore, Christians, according to Barth, had the duty to oppose Nazism, not as an evil state, but as a false faith. Second, Nazism proclaimed the Aryan race as a super race, thus paving the way for the eventual persecution of the Jewish people. This doctrine and the extermination of the Jews clearly violated the principles of the Gospel.[75]

Communism, on the other hand, does not represent for Barth the same threat and temptation to the Christian faith. He seems to be more concerned with the danger of hate and fear existing in the anti-communist world than in communism itself. Since the primary task of the church is self-renewal within its own community, the Word should be a call to repentance on the part of the Christian. Christians should not crusade against a godless communism in a self-righteous manner but should offer the communists the Word of the cross by going "against the stream" of human righteousness.[76]

Evaluation

With respect to the first question dealing with church teaching as an opiate or an ideology, Barth reinterprets the basic meaning of ideology to mean any man-centered theory. He says that no product of human thinking can presume to be free of ideology. And conversely, any thinking or action grounded in an obedient response to the Word of God is truth and not ideology. This is a very radical interpretation of ideology. It cautions the most radical reformer as well as the most conservative churchman that his action or inaction may very well be self-serving unless it is grounded in the revelation of God. Since this transcendent element is lacking in Marxism and even denied, historical materialism is an ideology. Barth's reply to Marx' critique of Christian churches is simple. Churchmen were disobedient to the scriptures and therefore their teaching became ideology. Barth does not indicate any familiarity with the details of Marx' writings, such as *Capital*, in which the latter demonstrates his hypothesis that the ideas (superstructure) arise from the modes of production. Barth's argument would have been considerably enhanced by his coming to grips with Marx' empirical studies.

In founding his *Dogmatics* completely on the Word of God and centered in Christ, Barth is as radical as Marx in the sense that he goes to the root of his Christian faith, showing how all liberation is dependent on the freeing Word of God. If man carries out the will of God, then his actions are not self-serving or ideological. This radical objectivity, unobscured by any ideology, has one serious drawback. It fails to be helpful precisely because it is so radical and hence so far removed from man's situation that it leaves one with the impression that man is a passive recipient of truth who does not have to struggle through much darkness and ambiguity to arrive at truth. After reading Barth, one has the impression that divine truth comes directly from God to man without being cycled through man's thinking process and interpreted by man in the light of his cultural bias, his knowledge of the arts and sciences, and the dynamics of political groups. We agree with Charles West's observation that Barth's Christian, freed from ideology, "rushes into political and economic judgments armed only with theological insight and a limited experience, ignoring a vast body of social scientific literature."[77] Included in this omission is a failure to grapple with Marx and Engels' notion of praxis.

According to Barth, all power comes from God; yet he fails to be helpful in situations where coalitions of power are formed. How, for example, do two or more Christian communities, both listening to the Word, reconcile their differences on an issue such as the Vietnam War or on the lending policies of the World Bank vis-à-vis Chile before and after the coup d'etat in 1973? In conclusion, Barth's response to the Marxist critique of religion is inadequate both for its failure to deal seriously with Marx' writings and especially for its failure to interpret God's Word in complex social-political-economical situations.

Paul Tillich: Liberation Through Religious Socialism

Response to Marx

In Paul Tillich one finds a theologian both more deeply immersed in Marx' writings than Karl Barth and also much more appreciative of the former's contributions. The incorporation of much Marxist thought into his doctrine of religious socialism stems from the similarities which Tillich perceives between the prophetic and Marxist interpretations of history and of man. The basic differences between religious socialism and Marxism are rooted in their ideas about transcendence. The same two questions which guided the discussion of Barth's response to Marxism will be followed in the analysis of Tillich's response.

Tillich correctly understands Marx' definition of ideology as the separation of theory, or the idea, from practice, which results in man's alienation. Translating this definition into religious language, Tillich speaks of ideology as an illusionary expression of will-to-power or libido.[78] What makes ideologies so dangerous is that they are created unconsciously. If an ideology were simply an outright political lie or a conscious falsification of international economic policy, then the danger would be less difficult to cope with. But precisely because ideologies are unconscious, their emergence into the level of subconscious belief and behavior subtly justifies the possession and use of power by the ruling class. Systems of philosophy, methods of science, and the dogma of religion often represent the working of "subconscious powers, psychological or sociological, which drive in a direction quite different from their conscious meaning."[79]

Two examples of the religious form of ideology which Tillich cites are medieval Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism.[80] Catholicism offers a secure way by which man might attain salvation and union with God through the sacraments and an ascetical life, the graces being mediated through the church represented by a hierarchy which exercises the sacramental powers and teaches a doctrine which unconsciously served in the interest of the feudal powers. Lutheranism confronts the individual personality with the necessity of making a religious decision, but it leaves him to his own resources in making a decision on the social-political level, understanding the dynamics of society to be ordained by God. The ideology that flows from this doctrine favors the interests of the status quo or the patriarchal order, even though the church and the groups supporting the Lutheran Church declare neutrality. In fact, the declared neutrality on the farm-labor problem deceived churchmen into thinking that they favored neither the farmworkers nor the landowners. This attitude is ideological. "Every aspect of the farm laborer's life showed him that this claim was not true and that the church was on the side of the landowners."[81] Later, in connection with nationalism, German Protestantism surrendered to this myth, supporting certain national power groups in economics or politics.

Tillich's response to Marxist opposition to religion stands as an interesting contrast to Barth's response. While both men acknowledge the presence of middle-class ideology in the Christian churches which directly or indirectly made alliances with feudal or bourgeois classes, their diagnoses of the cause and their proposed remedies for removing the cause are different. According to Barth, the cause lies principally in the church's not being obedient to the Gospel, resulting in the proclamation of faulty theologies. He characterized these as pietistic, subjective, anthropological, and abstractly dualistic. Tillich, too, criticizes the poor theology of the day, but for its lack of prophetic self-criticism in the light of the proletarian situation. To remedy the situation, Barth insists that the Christian should begin with scripture and allow the Word of God to judge man in his situation. Tillich's remedy begins with the existential questions that arise out of the proletarian situation and which then seek the answer given by divine revelation. The proletarian situation is interpreted through existential philosophy.

> Christian theology must first of all give up its alliance with idealistic metaphysics which interpret existence as the appearance of an essence of an idea, thus idealize given reality and support an anti-revolutionary

> conservatism. Christian theology must, secondly, give up such conceptions of transcendence as weaken the unconditional significance of social aid and political solution. This leads on to the third and most fundamental challenge: Christian theology must show that it does not hold to a second world next to or beyond the world of experience, but that its contents are symbols for the transcendent meaning of the one world of experience.[82]

Points two and three in this passage seem to be directed at Barth's theology, which admittedly has no political program, and which denies that man can reach the transcendent through the existential situation.

In agreeing with the thrust of Marx' opposition to organized religion, Tillich draws a comparison between religious socialism, which he founded, and Marxism. The first common element is concerned with truth, both doctrines asserting that truth must be "done" in order to be recognized. Theory and practice must be united, and in this unification ideology will be eliminated.

The second common element is the "historical interpretation of history." For both religious socialism and Marxism, history has a meaning of its own created by and focused on a goal. The historic events are gradual realizations of the goal, which give them meaning.[83] Marx' term for the crises of history which usher in a new meaningful stage is "revolution"; Tillich's term is "*kairós*." A struggle between the forces of good and evil ensues throughout history, forcefully realized at these various historical crises. The eventual outcome of the revolutionary struggle, as Marx sees it, is a classless society in which the evils of alienation and oppression are eliminated. Religious socialism is not as optimistic. The period following the crisis will bring about only partial actualization of a new principle of meaning. Tillich's interpretation of history differs from Marx' in that it does not set up one historical crisis (*kairós*) as absolute; it differs from Barth's interpretation in that the crisis does not occur in every moment in history.[84]

A third common element concerns the nature of man. Both religious socialism and Marxism agree that man is not what he ought to be. According to Marx, man is estranged from himself, from his work, and from his fellow man because of the system of capitalism. Tillich's explanation is more extensive. While alienation arises through exploitive labor, it is more properly rooted in man's pride (*hubris*), cupidity, and will-to-power.[85] Consequently, man is estranged from the ground of his being. Both Marx and Tillich are existentialists in the sense that they perceive man's problem resulting from the separation of his essence from his existence and man's fulfillment and liberation in the realization of what he is essentially.

So much for the similarities between religious socialism and Marxism. The two doctrines differ, as Tillich sees it, on the notion of transcendence. Tillich interprets Marxism as follows: The historical dialectical process involves a kind of transcendence, but it remains in time, dependent on the immanent processes of nature. It does not know or recognize eternity breaking into time.[86] But while Marxism depends upon the economic processes, it has a faith in the revolutionary activity of the proletarian classes to overturn the present evil age and to usher in a communistic society. The qualitative leap to the "utopian" society presupposes a kind of miracle, a faith that the demonic forces of injustice, pride, and will-to-power will be eliminated.

Liberation Without Ideology

What is Tillich's solution to the liberation of man? It is evident that by branding Marxism as "utopian," Tillich holds that Marxism is an ideology. The Marxist utopia absolutizes the classless state, which is really contradictory to its dialectical principle. If Marx is to be faithful to his dialectic within the historical process, there can be no final stage where it ceases to operate. Tillich's second

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point of disagreement with Marx' dialectic is that it is only horizontal, that is, history is realized entirely within a space-time continuum.

According to the doctrine of religious socialism, another dialectic is operative, the vertical, which is a relationship between the existential situation (the conditioned) and the unconditional. The moment in time when the horizontal and vertical intersect is called a *kairós*, a turning point in history. The unique and most universal of these moments in history occurred with the coming of Jesus the Christ, who conquered the estrangement between man's essential and existential being. Other *kairoi* occur in history in which the eternal, or unconditional, judges and transforms man. The unconditional is an abstraction from the unconditional claim which is expressed in the greatest of all commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul, and all thy mind."[87] Man experiences the unconditional at critical times, in which man, both individually and socially, is filled with anxiety and despair. The conditional breaks through to the deepest layers of his being. In these boundary situations, man must answer "yes" or "no" to realize the true and to actualize the good. If he says "no," his existence is driven into discord, into a hidden agony that infects all of his life. If he says "yes," his life receives a deeper meaning, which may be expressed in concrete action, such as the overthrow of unjust political and social structures. The judgment against man's pride, libido, and will-to-power is accepted. Man, in becoming more what he is essentially, becomes more free because he has transcended his vital existence, thus reducing the cleavage between what he actually is and what he essentially ought to be.

An example of the boundary is the proletarian situation, that situation in capitalistic society where society is broken up into classes which, because of its inequality, is a social perversion and a distortion of essential human nature.[88] Some members of this society, the proletarians and those allied with them, recognize this perversion and protest against the class structure responsible for this inequality. It is both a divine and human protest against the absolute claim made by the dominating and exploiting bourgeois class. If the majority of the people accept this judgment, a new and more deeply meaningful eon based on justice is inaugurated. Translated into Tillich's philosophical categories, the conditioned (capitalistic society) is open to the unconditioned or absolute.

In summary, Tillich's answer to the question of ideology raised by Marx is that no one theory or system or doctrine or state or class can claim to be absolute. Marx' solution to ideology is the immanent process of history which brings about a communistic society. Tillich replies that the final state is given absolute status and ultimately becomes an ideology itself. His solution is that man must be conscious of the crisis situation; that is, the inbreak of the eternal which judges and condemns the superficial, the unjust, the evil. The eternal drives man to his depth, where he can follow the inner law of his true or essential being.

Evaluation

There are many attractive features in Tillich's reply to Marx. His dialectical method, in which man is driven to a greater depth of his being where he asks ultimate questions, is more satisfactory than Barth's interpretation of man in crisis. For Tillich, man's existential questions arise out of his situation, interpreted with the help of existential philosophy, and other sciences such as psychology and sociology. The divine answers are then interpreted in the light of the question.[89] Both individual and corporate man are involved in a discernment process

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which demands all of man's rational and creative talents and mutual cooperation, and the assistance of man's secular as well as sacred knowledge. There is no sacred-secular split in Tillich's system. The law of God is expressed in the ground of man's being, not in an outside authority. Although Barth suggests that one keep the bible in one hand and the daily newspaper in the other, the ultimate authority and starting point is the Word of God as expressed in scripture.

Secondly, Tillich is aware of the powerful and subtle working of ideology in any system of thought and institution. While conceding that the churches were not and are not guiltless, he also points out the ideological form that Marxism itself takes precisely because it has no norm outside itself by which it can be judged. Hence, the Marxist society becomes absolute and totalitarian.

Does Tillich's system of liberation escape Marx' critique? It seems not. Tillich develops a philosophical theology along an existentialist line, which includes a program of religious socialism. When this theology was created by Tillich, it was supposed to be an answer to the crisis in Germany and Western Europe during the 1920s. But the *kairôs* was never realized. Tillich's theology as expressed in religious socialism remains an unexpected hope, a hypothesis which has never been historically realized. His hypothesis may be viewed as an ideology, not in the sense of being a doctrine which identifies with a particular class or interest group, but in the sense of lacking a material or actual foundation in society.

However, we are not primarily concerned with the historical outcome of an idea--whether it actually directs the transformation of society. We are concerned about the criteria by which the new era may be recognized. Not all decisive moments in history are breakthroughs to the deepest layers of life. Some of them may effect the demonic rather than the creative transformation of society according to the principles of truth and equality.[90] Tillich himself admits that his hopes were temporarily dashed after the First World War, when what was believed to be a *kairós* resulted in a victory for facism.[91] In the face of communism which spread throughout Eastern Europe and Russia, religious socialism was again too weak to be implemented, even though these concrete examples of communism were totalitarian and obviously lacking in religious-socialist principles. Tillich, apparently in a disillusioned frame of mind, wrote in 1949:

> It cannot be denied that this widespread repudiation of human rights [in communist-dominated countries] had a depressing effect also on those who, like myself, without being utopian, saw the dawn of a new creative era in a moment which actually presaged a deeper darkness.[92]

Tillich is not willing to admit that the rise of Nazism and communism was the beginning of a new era. But the question regarding the criteria for recognizing the boundary situation remains unanswered. Apparently one simply waits to see what will come of a particular revolution before judging.

Whatever a society built according to the principles of religious socialism might look like, Tillich admits that it is not a possiblity in the foreseeable future.

> Instead of a creative kairos, I see a *vacuum*--which can be made creative only if it is accepted and endured and, rejecting all kinds of premature solutions, is transformed into a deepening sacred void of waiting.[93]

The "new being" underlying religious socialism which was to be actualized in a new age is an illusion, an a priori in Tillich's mind.[94] Tillich seems to be a prisoner of his own ontological system and consequently is unable to understand the dynamic changing character of Marxism and the importance that praxis plays within the latter system, even though Tillich is in agreement with Marx' insistence on the unity between theory and practice. Praxis is not built into his theological system. For these reasons, we conclude that Tillich's model of religious socialism is not a completely satisfactory response to Marxism, although, as we have mentioned, it is an advance over Barth's response.

Reinhold Niebuhr: Liberation Through Christian Realism

In Reinhold Niebuhr one finds the sharpest critic of Marxism, a critic who first struggled through the problem of the industrial worker before he came to criticize Marx' thought. In 1915, Niebuhr came to Detroit as a young pastor to serve in an industrial parish. In this environment, he became familiar with the problems of the workers and with the greed and blindness of the industrial overlords in the Ford plant. He later wrote of this experience:

> Look at the industrial enterprise anywhere and you find criminal indifference on the part of the strong to the fate of the weak. The lust for power and the greed for gain are the dominant note in business. An industrial overlord will not share his power with his workers until he is forced to do so by tremendous pressure. The middle classes, with the exception of a small minority of intelligentsia, do not aid the worker in exerting this pressure. He must fight alone.[95]

Niebuhr learned through first-hand contact about the gross injustices brought about by class conflict. His reflection on these injustices moved him away from the Social Gospel Movement, which optimistically believed that a just society could be brought about by educational means and moral persuasion.

Around the beginning of the depression in the United States, Niebuhr came to adopt Marxist theory and strategy, although he never endorsed Marx' philosophy in full. For the next decade he was a Christian socialist, although John C. Bennett prefers to use the term "Christian Marxism" to describe Niebuhr's ideas during this period, because he "went far beyond the acceptance of socialism as a social goal or as a morally preferable alternative to capitalism."[96] Gradually, however, he abandoned his Marxist ideas, even though his political ethics contined to retain a residue of Marxism.[97]

Response to Marx

The first question regarding Niebuhr's response to Marx' critique of religion will be summarized in four parts: first, the goal of equal justice of Marx; second, his stress on the economic and political structures in shaping communities; third, the notion of class struggle; and fourth, Marxism as a religion.

Regarding Marx' goal or ideal of equality, Niebuhr writes:

> If he [proletarian] makes mistakes in choosing the means of accomplishing his ends, he has made no mistake either in stating the rational goal toward which

> society must move, the goal of equal justice, or in understanding the economic foundations of society.[98]

Niebuhr agrees with Marx' ideal of equality which is: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." Of course, Marx would not accept Niebuhr's term "ideal," since truths for Marx arise out of the factual situation, describing what is and what will be, but not what ought to be. The classless society will be an inevitable consequence of the class struggle now in process. Nevertheless, Niebuhr labels this society as an ideal and Marx' doctrine as idealism. But he specifies the nature of the ideal. "The fact that the equalitarian ideal does not spring from pure ethical imagination, but is the result of the peculiar circumstances of proletarian life, does not detract from its validity as the ultimate social ideal."[99] But even though the ideal arises from the empirical situation, that is, from the felt need of the proletarian, it is a goal that has not yet been realized. While the goal of Marxism arises from lived experience, the driving force of the revolution is through "spiritual promise, not its materialistic prospects."[100] Niebuhr welcomes this ideal as a wholesome and necessary antidote to the false justifications of inequality, but at the same time feels that it is too absolute to meet the requirements of a complex society and the needs of a weak human nature. Tillich, as we have seen, makes the same point about the Marxist society.

Niebuhr distinguishes two types of the ideal communistic state. The type which he calls "soft utopianism" is an ideal society of uncoerced justice in which every form of coercion, force, and power gradually becomes irrelevant. The second type, called "hard utopianism," is the real society brought about by communism which claims that the ideal society has already arrived and thereupon assumes the right to enforce the ideal. It deals ruthlessly with all enemies of the ideal.[101] In short, Niebuhr makes the same criticism of Marx' classless society that Barth and Tillich make; namely, that it is utopia and an ideal society. For all three theologians, this type of utopia is illusory.

The second part of Niebuhr's response deals with the political structures in shaping communities. Niebuhr, in agreement with Marx, came to understand that special privilege results from power and that ownership of the means of production is the most significant power in modern society. But not even in the early socialist Niebuhr is the social inequality reduced to the economical factor as in Marx. Other factors, chief among which is the human condition of also brought about the inequality. At any rate, Niebuhr became sensitized through Marx to the reality that the means of production constitute the basis of spiritual achievements and ideology of the controlling group.[102] Marx' position, however, is weakened both by his insistence that the cause of alienation and egoism is inherent in the institution of private property and by his narrow analysis of the social forces in society. If private property were the fundamental source of alienation, then the abolition of private property and the creation of a classless society would abolish all frictions, competitions, and alienation with that society. But this view is overly optimistic for two reasons: In the first place, egoism and alienation result from the ill will of man, not from the mere existence of faulty institutions and private property. In the second place, the primary purpose of private property and its accompanying laws is to prevent men from taking advantage of each other.[103] Niebuhr would admit that the unjust use of power held through private property is a consequence of powerful institutions but not a constitutive element of the institutions.

The third part of the response is concerned with the class struggle. Niebuhr adopts this insight as an element of his Christian realism, but criticizes Marx for failing to account for other social factors. Marx overlooks the inevitable situation within a classless society in which the property held in common would necessarily be managed by someone who would then be responsible for an enormous power, with all of the temptations to dictatorial rule.

> The possession of power is sweet and the corruptions of power are great. We may assume therefore that those who exercise this power do not concern themselves too much with the dreams which originally endowed their power with moral legitimacy.[104]

The consequence is that the economic and political power has been turned over to a single oligarchy, thus increasing the possibility of tyranny. Niebuhr's overriding concern is that the economic and political power be shared and balanced, for fear that an imbalance of power bring about tyranny. Applying Marx' principle (whoever controls the means of production controls society) to the inevitable situation in a Marxist state in which someone must manage the means of production, Niebuhr fears the probable situation of a power-heavy establishment becoming a totalitarian state. Even with the abolition of private property, the administrator of the means of production can enforce such a state by using every means at his disposal to enforce the laws of the ideal society. Sin is inherent in all men, and the proletariat, even though working toward an equalitarian ideal, do not by that fact become sinless carriers of the revolution. Nor would the managers of the ideal society be so disciplined and so rigorously just that they would not require checks and balances by other powers.

Furthermore, Marx' analysis of society is deficient because it too narrowly focuses on the means of production without considering other social factors. In addition to class domination, Marx should have analyzed factors such as the ruling nation, racial prejudice within classes, and cultural bias within subcultures.[105] While Marx did in fact include social, political, and cultural factors in his theory, Niebuhr notes, he understood them to be the resultants, not the causal determinants of the economy. Within Marx' fundamental structure of class warfare between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, coalitions of power are more numerous, and therefore the competition between functional groups is more complex than Marx understood it to be. The limits of reason and the dishonesty of the human heart are not confined to the class warfare situation, but are pervasive of all the multiple relationships in which men interact for survival, for the acquisition of power, and for recognition.

The final point concerns the religious element in

Marx' historical materialism. Niebuhr's general response to Marx' opposition to religion is a demonstration that Marxism itself is a religion. It is therefore subject to some of its own criticism. It is a religion because of its faith, its practice, its organization, and its authority. Central to its faith is the prophetic nature, which optimistically points to the eschatological vision of a classless society, and pessimistically denounces the alienation and oppression in the present societal structures.[106] Its practice is revolutionary activity occurring in a dialectical process of class warfare in which one class overthrows the other, thus bringing about a classless society of harmony and uncoerced justice. Its organization is the Communist Party, which has a centralized authority to enforce its ideal of equality and to interpret further change in the light of its goal.[107]

Niebuhr's analysis of the Marxist religion begins first with a recognition of the positive value within Marxism. Its insights into human nature correspond to the insights of prophetic religion, as Tillich pointed out.[108] Niebuhr concedes that much of Marx' criticism of religion is valid, such as the empirical church's frequently becoming enmeshed in secular interests and failing to challenge effectively the social practices of society.[109] Responding directly to Marx' criticism that religion is the "universal ground for consolation and justification," Niebuhr again recognizes that the Christian teaching about human nature has often softened the demands of the laws of love and justice either by interpreting the existing evils in society as God-given or by encouraging social change only within an ordered plan, often in accordance with the design of the secular society.[110] In acknowledging the guilt of the Christian communities, Niebuhr takes the same stance as Barth and Tillich. Yet he seems less alarmed than his colleagues that the Gospel had become distorted in the Church's proclamation.

> The truth, as it is contained in Christian revelation, includes and recognizes that it is neither possible for man to know the truth fully, nor to avoid the error of pretending that he does.[111]

Corrupting the truth of revelation with man's own interests is an inevitable outcome of trying to express his own understanding of his faith in thought and deed.

Niebuhr sees many deficiencies in the Marxist religion, one of which is the same criticism that Marx directs against Christianity. Marxism, which criticizes the bourgeois ideology from almost every aspect, incorporates the bourgeois rationalism and naturalism as its underlying philosophy.[112] The philosophy is a form of French materialism, which stresses the omnipotence of experience, habit, and education. Using this materialism in terms of a Hegelian dialectic, he projects "a materialistic version of an even more traditional religious apocalypse."[113]

A second deficiency in the Marxist religion is that it is monistic, limited to this world and to the historical process of the subconscious universe. This is essentially the same observation made by Barth and Tillich. Lacking an absolute and transcendent element, Marxism absolutizes a relative and earthly good (socialist state), while denying that an absolute being transcends this worldliness. Its vision of perfect harmony, progress, and innocence following the achievement of the classless society is derived wholly from its historical and materialistic process. Consequently, there is no room for self-criticism because it lacks a critical principle outside of its own system. The Marxist philosophy ends up being an ideology itself.

In the third place, Niebuhr believes that Marx' utopia is an illusion because of the human condition of man's sinfulness which will always be a "given" in any society. It is realistic to acknowledge the imperfection in society and then to help man to live a human life within the finite and imperfect world.

> Once it is recognized that the socialist society which we intend to build will not be a perfect society, and that it will not be able to save individuals from many frustrations, unfulfilled hopes and unrealized dreams, it must also be conceded that individuals are bound to express themselves not only by setting goals for a better society, but by finding ways of bearing the injustices and frustrations of the moment in terms of a faith which sees life in its essential rather than its existential reality.[114]

In this passage, we have one of the essential elements of Christian realism, the pervasiveness of self-centeredness, pride, and self-deception in society. This "given" does not overlook the divine image in man and his vocation to create a better society. But it cautions man against an overly optimistic outlook of man's possibilities. As a people attempts to set goals for a better society, it must at the same time counteract the inevitable misuse of power.

Liberation Without Ideology

Niebuhr's positive response to Marx' criticism of religion as an opiate and ideology may be understood through his dialectic. While Marx' dialectic has no built-in mechanism for self-criticism, Niebuhr's consists of a relation between God's revelation and the empirical reason of man. The truth of God's Word, which is expressed preeminently in the suffering love of Christ, both fulfills and negates man's search for self-fulfillment. Even in his best efforts to establish justice, man's attempts only approximate, and sometimes contradict the spirit of brotherhood.

> They [systems of justice] set the limits upon each man's interest to prevent one from taking advantage of the other. A harmony achieved through justice is therefore only an approximation of brotherhood. It is the best possible harmony within the conditions created by human egoism.[115]

The transcendent Word of the Gospel tries to correct the inevitable distortions of perspective, those ideological elements which can and do become the basis for theories of justice. The empirical reasoning of man is then guided by the cross of Jesus Christ as the final meaning and fulfillment of history. And this is best done within a democratic society.[116]

The dialectic of Niebuhr therefore can be viewed as a tension between the Gospel and the empirical reason of man; between transcendent love and justice; between freedom and law. Love illuminates and corrects the system of justice; justice is the instrument by which love and freedom are insured and concretized. In a letter to Karl Barth, Niebuhr says:

> Freedom over law cannot mean emancipation from the tortuous and difficult task of achieving a tolerable justice. It is certainly not right for Christians to leave it to the "pagans" of our day to walk the tightrope of our age which is strung over the abyss of war and tyranny, seeking by patience and courage to prevent war on the one hand and the spread of tyranny on

> the other, while Christians rejoice in a "revolutionary hope" in which all these anxieties of human existence . . . are overcome proleptically.[117]

He is stressing the importance of justice and cautioning Barth that freedom gained in faith does not excuse one from the obligation to labor to improve the conditions of man.

Evaluation

Niebuhr's response to Marxism was treated under four headings: first, the ideal of equality and the social product of this ideal called the utopia; second, ownership of private property as the significant power in society; third, the class struggle; fourth, the specific charge against religion. Each of these will be evaluated in turn.

Regarding the ideal of equality (from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs), Niebuhr assumes throughout the discussion that Marx has an ethic which constitutes a religious system. In this ethical system, universal equality is the value or ideal toward which the proletariat strive to uproot egotism. Whether Marx has an ethical system is a much debated point. The crux of the debate centers on the fact-value distinction. Those who maintain that Marx' writings separate values from facts, and Niebuhr is one among them, argue for a Marxist ethic. On the other hand, those who contend that the factual and evaluative elements are internally related with no real distinction, deny that there is an ethical system in Marx.[118] Bertell Ollman, who holds the latter view, argues that Marx' statements about social revolution, which appear to be idealistic imperatives separate from facts, are really "facts" containing their condemnation and a call to do something about them. He gives the following example to support his argument:

> For example, Marx claims that when a communist stands in front of "a crowd of scrofulous, overworked and consumptive starvelings," he sees "the necessity, and at the same time the condition, of a transformation both of industry and of the social structure."[119]

If an individual chooses to act otherwise, Ollman says, it is not because he has made a contrary moral judgment, but simply is the result of his stance in the community (his class, personal history, etc.) which has led him to interpret the facts differently. In other words, one individual is not to be praised, another blamed because of a course of action he has chosen.

We agree with Niebuhr's position over against Ollman's regarding the question of an ethics in Marx' writings. Ollman, in the example given above, erroneously thinks that Marx' call for revolution is a value-free statement made up only of facts, which can be negated by another set of facts. But the facts not only describe realities, they express favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward an object which has been described. Marx' language addressed to the proletariat clearly expresses an unfavorable attitude toward the ruling classes and a favorable one toward the communists, as evidenced by the final paragraph of *The Communist Manifesto*.

> The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE![120]

It seems clear from this passage that Marx and Engels are blaming the ruling classes when they urge them to "tremble." The imperative issued to the workers to unite clearly implies an "ought."

In supporting Niebuhr's position, however, we also point out that he uses the term "ideal" equivocally. Sometimes his use of the term connotes an unattainable objective (something "unreal"), as when he says that the Marxist ideal is too absolute or utopian. At other times, Niebuhr speaks of the "ideal" as a value or principle which is the driving force of the revolutionary activity toward which man must move. When Niebuhr uses the word "ideal" in the former sense, then we agree with him that the ideal of equality appears overly optimistic in its stance that the communist revolution will transform society from one of exploitation and alienation to one of uncoerced justice. When Niebuhr uses the term in the latter sense, he seems to be giving an unfair interpretation to Marx' and Engels' thought because he implies that the ideal stands apart from the conditions within history. The Marxist position is clearly stated in *The German Ideology*.

> Communism is for us not a state of *affairs* still to be established, not an *ideal* to which reality [will] have to adjust. We call communism the *real* movement which abolished the present state of affairs. The conditions of this movement result from premises now in existence.[121]

On the second point regarding ownership and special privilege, Niebuhr's criticism of Marx and Engels regarding the cause of alienation and egoism is well made. Egoism and alienation will not cease to exist when private property is abolished for the following reasons: First, the abolition of power held through ownership will raise up another form of power which may become more dangerous because of a higher degree of centralization, namely, centralization within the administrators' domain in the socialist state; second, the fundamental cause of egoism is ill will on the part of man. Niebuhr could be clearer in showing more precisely what the nature of power is. Aside from the obvious injustice in a power imbalance, we wonder whether there is any other reason why the possession of power leads to evil. If egoism is not inherent in private property, then are private property and other forms of power simply *conditions* for egoism? Niebuhr fails to clarify this.

On the third point regarding the class struggle, Niebuhr accurately points out the wider dimensions of the struggle, not only on the theological level with all of its dangers to arrogance and dictatorial rule, but on the socio-political level where cultural and political factors condition the nature and outcome of the struggle.

The final point on the religious nature of Marxism, Niebuhr recognizes the merits and deficiencies of this secular religion. The sharpest criticism of the Marxist religion made by Niebuhr is its naive belief in man's basic goodness which will manifest itself when the appropriation of all productive forces are under human control within a classless society. Because of this unreal view of man and the Marxist vision of the classless society which is based on this view, Niebuhr brands Marx' utopia as "illusion." But in criticism of Niebuhr, Niebuhr himself seems to place the concrete will of God in the pragmatic democratic tradition. Moreover, he fails to develop an eschatological element, a vision, which not only could have better related to Marx' utopia, but could have also served as a critical tool against the very tradition with which he most closely identified.

In conclusion, we find that Niebuhr's response is the best of the three considered in this chapter. Yet it is not entirely satisfactory. Niebuhr's realism is too much concerned with the balancing of power and cautioning would-be revolutionaries against the realities of man's sinful situation and nature. Consequently, he has difficulty moving from Christ's law of love to a concrete ideal toward which man might strive to achieve a greater freedom. Agape seems to be a willing of justice to others and hence does not seem to be a creative concept, which we think it ought to be. Niebuhr's struggle for justice consists largely in the effort to increase the power of the oppressed. This stands in sharp contrast to Marx, whose efforts toward equality is to decrease the power (in the form of private property) of all members of society. Niebuhr is very realistic in understanding the idological justification of power.

Second, his stress on power balance in ethics can be conceived of as an ideology by those peoples in the third world countries, who, lacking any power to begin with, are cautioned immediately against the dangers in beginning a revolution. For many people who are trapped in poverty with little or no recourse for development and survival, the revolution of Marx seems much more realistic and the realism of Niebuhr more ideological.

Notes

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[2] Georg Wilhelm Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. by J. B. Baillie (New York: The Humanities Press, Inc., 1964), p. 229.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

[4] Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, ed. by Allan Bloom and trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1969), p. 49.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, pp. 236-237.

[7] Kojève, *Reading of Hegel*, p. 50.

[8] Georg Wilhelm Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans by J. Sibree (New York: The Colonial Press, 1899), p. 37.

[9] Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, pp. 611-627.

[10] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, reprinted in part in *Marx & Engels On Religion*. introd. by Reinhold Niebuhr (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), pp. 77-78.

[11] Karl Marx, quoted without reference by Henri Lefebvre, *Dialectical Materialism*, trans. by John Sturrock (London: Jonathan Cape, 1968), p. 63.

[12] Karl Marx, "An Exchange of Letters," addressed to Arnold Ruge, reprinted in *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. and trans. by Loyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), p. 213.

[13] Karl Marx, *Capital*, ed. by Friedrich Engels (2d ed.; New York: The Modern Library, 1906), p. 145.

[14] Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 274.

[15] Bruno Bauer, quoted without reference by Marx in "On the Jewish Question," reprinted in *Writings of the Young Marx*, ed. by Easton and Guddat, p. 220.

[16] Marx, *Writings of the Young Marx*, p. 241.

[17] Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1958), p. 243.

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, trans. by George Eliot with an introd. by Karl Barth and foreword by H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p. xxxviii.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 270.

[21] Hook, *From Hegel to Marx*, pp. 249-250.

[22] Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in *Marx & Engels On Religion*, p. 41.

[23] Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," *ibid.*, p. 70.

[24] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, The Marxist-Leninist Library, Vol. XVII (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1940), Part I, p. 1.

[25] Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," *On Religion*, p. 69.

[26] Roger Garaudy, *Karl Marx: The Evolution of His Thought*, trans. by Nan Apotheker (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1967), p. 67.

[27] Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," *On Religion*, pp. 69-70.

[28] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. with introd. by C. S. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970), p. 42.

[29] Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man*, with trans. by T. B. Bottomore of *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1961), p. 17.

[30] István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 163.

[31] Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, in *Karl Marx Early Writings*, ed. by T. B. Bottomore, with a Foreword by Erich Fromm (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), pp. 124-129.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

[33] Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, p. 167.

[34] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, in *Marx & Engels Basic Writings*, ed. by Lewis S. Feuer, Anchor Books (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1959), p. 43.

[35] Nicholas Lobkowicz, "Marxism," *Sacramentum Mundi*, III (1969), 426-429. The technical definitions in this section are taken from this article.

[36] Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*, in *Marx & Engels Basic Writings*, p. 44.

[37] Richard Lichtman, "The Marxian Critique of Christianity," *Marxism and Christianity*, ed. by Herbert Aptheker (New York: The Humanities Press, 1968), pp. 65-121.

[38] Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, pp. 70-72.

[39] Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, trans. by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1936), pp. 55-59.

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[41] Lichtman, "The Marxian Critique of Christianity," *Marxism and Christianity*, pp. 78-80.

[42] *Ibid.*, p.79.

[43] Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, in *On Religion*, p. 149.

[44] Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, with an Introduction by A. J. P. Taylor (Middlesex, England: Pengiun Books, 1967), pp. 68-71.

[45] Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, reprinted in *Marx & Engels Basic Writings*, p. 106.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[47] Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism*, in *On Religion*, p. 68.

[48] Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 83.

[49] Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, in *Marx & Engels Basic Writings*, p. 230.

[50] Karl Barth, "Ludwig Feuerbach," *Theology and Church* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1962), pp. 217-237.

[51] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. III: *The Doctrine of Creation*, trans. by A. T. MacKay and others (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), Part 2, pp. 387-390.

[52] Barth, *Theology and Church*, p. 227.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III/2, 390.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 382.

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 389.

[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 388-389.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 390.

[60] Charles C. West, *Communism and the Theologians* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1958), p. 181.

[61] Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. from the sixth edition by Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 480.

[62] Barth, *Theology and Church*, p. 234.

[63] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. II: *The Doctrine of God*, trans. by Harold Knight (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), Part 2, p. 54.

[64] *Ibid.*, III/1, 265.

[65] *Ibid.*, III/4, 13.

[66] Karl Barth, "Gospel and Law," *Community, State, and Church*, with an Introduction by Will Herberg (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1968), pp. 84-85.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[68] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, II/2, 546.

[69] *Ibid.*, III/4, 506.

[70] Karl Barth, "Church and State," *Community, State, and Church*, p. 129.

[71] Karl Barth, *Against the Stream*, ed. by Ronald Gregor Smith (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 86.

[72] Karl Barth, *Theological Existence To-Day!* trans. by R. Birch Hoyle (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1933), p. 13.

[73] Barth, *Against the Stream*, pp. 139-140.

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[76] West, *Communism*, p. 302.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 286.

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[79] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

[80] *Ibid.*, p. 168.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 180.

[82] Paul Tillich, "The Attack of Dialectical Materialism," *The Student World* (2nd Quarter, 1938), pp. 117-122.

[83] Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, p. 254.

[84] West, *Communism*, p. 81.

[85] Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, p. 255.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 256.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 166.

[89] Paul Tillich, "Beyond Religious Socialism," *The Christian Century*, LXVI (June 15, 1949), 732-733.

[90] Eduard Heimann, "Tillich's Doctrine of Religious Socialism," *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, The Library of Living Theology, Vol. I, ed. by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 321.

[91] *Ibid.*, p. 320.

[92] Tillich, "Beyond Religious Socialism," pp. 732-733.

[93] *Ibid.*

[94] West, *Communism*, p. 110.

[95] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic* (Hamden, Connecticut: Shoe String Press, 1956), p. 94.

[96] John C. Bennett, "Reinhold Niebuhr's Social Ethics," *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought*, The Library of Living Theology, Vol. II, ed. by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 63.

[97] Kenneth Thompson, "The Political Philosophy of Reinhold Niebuhr," *ibid.*, pp. 151-175.

[98] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 165.

[99] *Ibid.*, p. 160.

[100] *Ibid.*, p. 163.

[101] Reinhold Niebuhr, "Two Forms of Tyranny," *Christianity and Crisis*, VIII (February 2, 1948), 3-5.

[102] Reinhold Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1935), p. 123.

[103] Niebuhr, "Two Forms of Tyranny," pp. 3-5.

[104] *Ibid.*

[105] Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, p. 123.

[106] West, *Communism*, p. 132.

[107] Niebuhr, "Two Forms of Tyranny," pp. 3-5.

[108] Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, p. 124.

[109] Reinhold Niebuhr, "Is Religion Counter Revolutionary?" *Radical Religion*, I (Autumn 1935), 14-20.

[110] West, *Communism*, p. 137.

[111] Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vol. II: *Human Destiny* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), p. 225.

[112] Niebuhr, "Introduction," *Marx & Engels On Religion*, pp. vii-xiv.

[113] Niebuhr, "Is Religion Counter Revolutionary?" pp. 14-20.

[114] Niebuhr, *Human Destiny*, p. 252.

[115] *Ibid.*

[116] West, *Communism*, p. 155.

[117] Reinhold Niebuhr, "We Are Men and Not God," *The Christian Century*, LXV (October 27, 1948), 1139.

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[119] Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 49.

[120] Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, pp. 120-121.

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CHAPTER III

LIBERATION THEOLOGY:
A NEW RESPONSE TO THE MARXIST CRITIQUE

The Old and the New in Theology: Comparison of the Old Response to the New Thrust

In Chapter II, three responses to Marx' and Engels' critique of religion were investigated. In each response there is common agreement that the greatest weakness in Marxist theory is its absence of a transcendent power, the lack of which results in a monistic and absolutist theory of revolution. Marx, so helpful and incisive in unmasking not only the ideology of Hegelianism, but also all the various ideological forms in religious and secular social structures which serve the power interests of certain groups, is in the final analysis victim of his own critique. By substituting the part (communist state) for the whole (other forms of society) and absolutizing the material forces while denying the existence of any spiritual dimension, Marx' and Engels' theory becomes an ideology. The neo-orthodox theologians' responses to the ideological problem, although differing on many points, concur on one essential point; namely, that true emancipation of man in society is a gift of God effectively communicated to man. For Barth, the communication is revealed through the Word of God preeminently by Christ; for Niebuhr, through the suffering love (agape) of Christ. In stressing the absence of the transcendent in the Marxist theory, these theologians point to a problem which Marxism to this day has difficulty solving.

And yet, because of the heavy emphasis on the active role of God and the passive role of man in realizing his freedom, their responses do not adequately answer the Marxist critique. They all come down too heavily on man's limitations--his finitude and sinfulness--thus failing to bring out the positive talents that man possesses for creating better and more just living conditions and for responsibly and imaginatively taking control of his own destiny through Christian practice. The man of faith in neo-orthodox theology is not strongly dedicated to the task of transforming himself and his environment through praxis, a task which, in the final analysis, is the Marxist test of nonideological truth.

Thomas Ogletree and others have observed a shift in focus in theological reflection.[1] The old theology of neo-orthodoxy stresses the boundary situation and realism; the new stresses the meaning of man's creative power in responsibly shaping his own life and the life of the world. In the old theology, roughly from the 1920s through the 1950s, the emphasis is on man's limits, his anxiety, and sinfulness. Barth and Tillich, the chief architects of the boundary-situation theology, create a systematic theology which makes man very conscious of his finitude. Barth, who stresses the infinitely great distance between God and man, shows how the Word of God brings about radically new possibilities of God which stand at the boundary of all human achievements. Tillich's starting point is making man aware of his limits and weaknesses, of the boundary situation where revelation occurs.[2] In Tillich's autobiographical sketch, *On the Boundary*, he writes of this anxiety: ". . . The highest possibility for achieving non-ideological truth is given at the point of profoundest meaninglessness, through the deepest despair, in man's greatest estrangement from his own nature."[3]

Niebuhr likewise focuses on man's limitations, as we noted in Chapter II. His theology discloses the limits of man's reason and the dishonesty of the human heart which permeate all social relationships. Whenever man tries to express his understanding of the faith, his own interests corrupt the truth of God's revelation. While Niebuhr stresses man's obligation to transform the conditions of man much more than do Barth and Tillich, he realistically points out that even in his best efforts, the Christian will only approximate the true spirit of brotherhood.

In the newer thrust in theology, the Christian message speaks not only about man's weaknesses, but also about his strengths. In the age of technology, man's responsible and creative role in using this technology receives more attention. Harvey Cox, a theologian who has captured the spirit of the new thrust, writes: "I would begin any Christian anthropology with an affirmation of man's possibilities within history. . . . I would bring in sin as a minor rather than a major motif."[4] Three movements which have given impetus to the new thrust are the theology of hope, the theology of revolution, and the theology of liberation, all of which are closely related.

As the short-lived "Death of God" movement began to wane, the theology of hope with its stress on the eschatological driving force and man's anticipation of the promise by working to change society arose in the early 1960s.

According to the latter theology, man begins to understand himself as a man open to the promise of a qualitatively new future, which inspires and empowers him to struggle with the unjust and unfree conditions of the present society. It is no sheer coincidence that Christian-Marxist dialogues rose up shortly after the theology-of-hope school developed. For biblical eschatology, with its stress on destroying the present evil age and ushering in the new, has many parallels to the revolutionary stance of Marxism.[5]

As the theology-of-hope school gradually spread from Germany to the United States, and as the dialogues between Christians and Marxists grew in number, the possibilities of revolution, dressed in Marxist language, were voiced more frequently in articles and in conferences.[6] One of the most noteworthy of these conferences was held in Geneva in July 1966, sponsored by the World Council of Churches. Included in this World Conference on Church and Society were laymen, clergymen, and theologians from seventy nations, including delegates from the third world countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Revolution was its theme as the Conference focused on problems of modern technology, the need for fundamental changes in the relationship between the poor third world countries and the advanced industrial nations, the struggle for world peace, and the problems of international justice.[7] In one of the major addresses, Vitaly Borovoy spoke of revolution in terms of repentance for individuals and for society as a whole. "Thus Christianity is by its very nature revolutionary," he said, as he urged Christians to join boldly and actively in the building of a new and just society.

Responses to this conference were generally critical of the terms "revolution" and "theology of revolution," which were used frequently in the addresses and debates. Edouard Diserens wrote in the *Gazette de Lausanne*:

> In the past, God was for the established order; today, God is for revolution. In the past, God was for tradition and the respect of authority; today God is for the radical renewal of society, expressing itself in its own processes of break with the past and of reorientation. Who has God's wisdom to interpret the evolution and revolutions of nations?[8]

Roger Mehl, a participant at the conference, pointed out the ambiguity of the term "revolution."

> For Westerners it obviously meant the profound and silent transformation of the structures of industrial society. For many representatives of the third world it had a much more ideological and romantic flavour: it referred to the violent transformations which characterize the post-colonial and pre-industrial period.[9]

Whether Mehl is correct in his assertion that the Latin American's cry for revolution is more ideological and romanticized than the Westerner's is a debatable point. In any event, he correctly points out the ambiguity and inadequacy of the term "revolution." Partly because of its ambiguity, partly because of its association with violence, and partly because of its identification with Marxism, the concept served to polarize the participants at the conference.

As the term "revolution" caused a split within Protestant circles, so did the term "liberation" within Roman Catholic ranks in Latin America. The two themes of revolution and liberation, despite their differences, do coincide on many points. Hence, it would come as no surprise that the polarizations within the respective churches on the issue of these two themes brought about a striking convergence of Protestant and Roman Catholic thinking. Protestant thinkers supporting a revolutionary theology are sympathetic to Catholic thinkers who are developing a theology of liberation. Moreover, the Medellin Conference near Bogota in 1968 played for Latin American Roman Catholics a role parallel to that of the Ecumenical Conference in Geneva in 1966 for Latin American Protestants.[10] At Medellin, however, the discussion of liberation was discussed over against the traditional concept of development. In Latin America, the term "development" (*desarrollismo*) has functioned as the model which best expressed the aspirations of the poor. But in recent years, especially as a result of the conference at Medellin, the model of development has come under heavy criticism. The reasons for this are the following: First, development has frequently been promoted by international organizations with close connections to corporations and nations which control the world economy. Consequently, any social change following this model must be achieved within the formal, existing governmental structure. Second, development frequently results in piecemeal and ineffective change which is counterproductive. Third, development often becomes a series of clever maneuvers designed to bring about greater advantage for the large economic interests at the expense of the poor of the country.[11] Harvey Cox summarizes very well the feelings of many Latin Americans toward the concept of development:

> The third worlders are convinced that the rules under which the game of trade and development is now played are cruelly stacked to their disadvantage. They believe the widening gap between developed and developing nations comes from the fact that the developed nations treat the other nations merely as sources of raw materials (whose prices are set outside the third world) and possible markets for commodities. . . . They resent being objects of charity, and their experience with western theories of economic development in the past decade has not been a very happy one.[12]

As Latin Americans observe the widening gap between their own so-called "developing" nations and the developed nations, they are beginning to reject the concept of world development. Many have called for revolution as the only effective means of overthrowing the oppressive system. Some, including priests, have taken up arms to fight their oppressors.[13] Reactions of the churchmen to the revolutionary activity of Camilo Torres, Ché Guevara, and Fidel Castro, and others have polarized the churches into three groups: conservatives, or neo-integrists from Europe, who focus on the church rather than on the world; developmentalists, chiefly from the United States, who are favorable to technical and industrial development; the revolutionaries, or those pushing for liberation, who want the church to cut ties with the establishment and begin working toward a just society.[14]

It was in this milieu that the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops convened in Medellin near Bogota in 1968. The theme of liberation, not development, was the main topic throughout the discussions. The Conference of Bishops spoke of a "transformation of consciousness" and of change that is based upon the gospel as a message of liberation.[15] Concepts such as "liberation," "vision," "transformation," and "man, the artisan of his own destiny" were important notions in discussing the issues of justice and peace. Bishops spoke about a theology of man, the future, and about a hope which is not based on present societies, but on utopian models that do not yet exist.[16] In reading the signs of the times, the bishops suggest that man is on the threshold of a new epoch in Latin America. It is a time for liberation, which they define as ". . . full emancipation . . . from every form of servitude, of personal maturity and of collective integration."[17]

These two conferences at Geneva and at Medellin highlight the new thrust in theological reflection in contemporary society. It emphasizes man's responsible participation in the transformation of the present society into one that is more just and free. Radical change is the cry. This demands both the transformation of sociopolitical-economic structures and the conversion of man's heart. His active role involves becoming a creator--an artisan who takes a more active, political role in shaping his own life.

Liberation Process:
Definitions and Dimensions

Liberation and Revolution

That Moltmann, Alves, and Gutierrez recognize the inadequacy of the developmental model is clear from their position papers presented at the Consultation on Theology and Development held in Cartigny, Switzerland in 1969. In these papers, each criticized the notion of development for many of the same reasons mentioned above.[18] In place of this model, they propose a model of revolution or liberation which emphasizes hope and the creative imagination. That the term "liberation" is preferred over "revolution" is likewise clear from each man's writings, even though all three continue to use the latter term occasionally when referring to radical change.

In an article entitled "Religion, Revolution, and the Future," Moltmann indicates a certain dissatisfaction with the term "revolution."[19] Derived from the Latin word, *revolvere*, meaning "to roll back," it generally referred to astronomical phenomena in which a heavenly body would return to its initial constellation, thus completing a cycle. Even though the concept is used today to signify a radical change or an overthrow of government, it continues to connote the return to a golden age of the distant past. By returning to the pristine order of things, a people may restore its original spirit and tradition by ushering in a *re*naissance, *re*formation, or *re*vival. Even modern theology has relied on this cyclical model, as exemplified in the early writings of Karl Barth, Friedrich Gogarten, and Rudolf Bultmann. Moltmann suggests the word "provolution" as a substitute in order to capture the notion of the realization of something qualitatively new.[20] Apparently this concept of "provolution" failed to satisfy him because it, too, drops out of his subsequent writings. The concept "liberation," on the other hand, appears more and more frequently, eventually becoming the working concept in his latest publications. In 1971, he published an article entitled "Theological Basis of Human Rights and the Liberation of Man" and an essay, *The First Liberated Men in Creation*. In his latest book, *Der gekreuzigte Gott*, he relates his theology to the Latin American theology of liberation in the final chapter, entitled "Ways to a Political Liberation of Man."

Alves prefers the concept of liberation over revolution primarily because the latter concept stresses too much the negating element of the emancipating process at the expense of the positive element, which involves the creation of something qualitatively new. The revolutionary model understands the dialectic of freedom as "intrinsically and exclusively determined by the dialectic of the material relations in society."[21]

For Gutierrez, "liberation" is likewise a more suitable term. Revolution connotes the emancipation of whole classes in economic and political terms, while failing to bring out the important dimensions of individual freedom and of freedom for concrete groups which are not identified with the Marxist class division. In other words, revolution does not include the micro- as well as the macro-social structures. It fails to convey the notion that both a new man as well as a new society must be created. Finally, liberation is preferred because of its biblical basis, where the notion of liberation-salvation in Christ is stressed.[22]

The Process of Liberation

Marx and Engels rarely use the term "liberation." They speak more often of revolution or of human emancipation. Human emancipation is a radical revolution of the modes of production accompanied by a corresponding radical change of men--in their working relationships, their institutions, and in their ideas, habits, and use of leisure. Moltmann, Alves, and Gutierrez have incorporated some of these insights in varying degrees from the Marxist theory of human emancipation into their own theories of liberation.

For all three theologians liberation is an ongoing event or process in which man gradually realizes his freedom. Each distinguishes the two aspects of liberation: *freedom from* the coercive forces from within and without; *freedom to* become more human, to celebrate one's existence, and to create one's destiny. The negative and positive aspects of the process are dialectical. The dialectical process of the theologians' systems follows the structural pattern of the Hegelian-Marxist dialect, although the content includes a Christian interpretation of historical change. The first moment of the dialectic, the negation, is the suffering brought upon man by internal and external oppression--personal and social sin of man. As man gains awareness of his enslavement and as he acquires sufficient power and freedom, he struggles to overcome the oppression (*freedom from*). This is the second moment. The negation of the negation is at the same time an affirmation of a new life or state of affairs in which the oppressed experience themselves as subjects possessing independence and new dignity (*freedom to*).

The process of liberation is complex, involving many forces dynamically interacting with each other on different levels of existence. In analyzing the social forces, each theologian uncovers many dimensions of the liberating process. Gutierrez distinguishes three interacting dimensions: political liberation, liberation of man throughout history, and liberation from sin and admission to communion with God.[23] Although less clearly distinguishable, the dimensions in Alves' model parallel those of Gutierrez: technological-political, cultural-historical, and the level of faith. In one of his writings, he discusses three levels of liberation as (1) ultimate concern, which are the basic needs of survival on the biological, cultural, social level; (2) language, which solves practically the ultimate concern; (3) religion, which is the projection of the ultimate concern and its solution.[24] Moltmann surpasses both Gutierrez and Alves in unpacking various dimensions of the liberating process. He discusses the dynamics of liberation on the level of faith, the level of the productive imagination, and the level of politics, the last of which is subdistinguished according to five dimensions: the economic, political, cultural, ecological, and the meaning of life.[25]

The realities of alienation, oppression, anxiety, and freedom exist on all of these levels. For Marx, the alienation and oppression of man is fundamentally caused by the laborer losing power and control over the product of his labor, which then gains mastery over him. As a result, the worker ceases being productive and human. He is unable to exercise freely his natural powers, leaving him "physically exhausted and mentally debased."[26] The theologians, while recognizing the validity of Marx' analysis of alienation in the working process, maintain that the cause of man's alienation is much more profound, involving the deepest levels of existence. To attack only one of the causes of man's alienation, whether it be the condition of labor, sinful practices of corporations, or personal sin, would not fully liberate man.

The process of liberation is fraught with many pitfalls for those who would attempt to liberate themselves without dealing with all of the dimensions of man's existence. Gutierrez, Alves, and Moltmann note two of these pitfalls. One form is that of idealism or spiritualism; the other, materialism. The first pitfall arises because of an overemphasis upon doctrine and the resolution of conflict through a change in attitude without any change in the social structure of society. Here is where Marx' and Engels' analysis of society has influenced the radical utopians, who include the political transformation of society as a necessary part of the total process. At the same time, the theologians recognize the fundamental materialism in the

Marxist analysis, which by itself is an illusion. The illusion of materialism both overemphasizes the determining forces of society and makes absolute the activity of the revolutionary, who has little appreciation of the transcendent and eschatological dimension in the process. The theologians try to avoid these two pitfalls by integrating theory and praxis, the dimensions of faith and political involvement, interior and exterior liberation. Just how successful they are in integrating the two elements will be seen in Chapters V and VI.

Who is to be liberated and who is the liberator? The subject and object of liberation are the same. Since liberation theology has rejected the concept of development, those who are unfree must free themselves. This means that whoever is oppressed and exploited, dependent and made poor, humbled, and forsaken must actively struggle for freedom, justice, and peace. This description would include the colonized people in third world countries as well as the black people and other exploited minority groups in the United States, Europe, and Africa. The assumption made by the radical utopians is that the oppressors themselves are the ones most in need of liberation. But their freedom can only come after or during the liberation of the oppressed.

As for the role played by the Christian churches, Gutierrez, Alves, and Moltmann are unmistakably clear that the churches must side with the oppressed, not in any neo-clerical or neo-colonial way and not as a "heavenly arbiter" in the struggle between the oppressed and the oppressors.[27] Specific characteristics of each theological language of liberation will now be examined, focusing especially on the manner in which each theologian relates the political and faith dimensions in the liberation process.

Alves and the Process of Liberation

Alves develops his notion of liberation primarily in the context of the third world, the latter term being defined in terms of dependency, exploitation, and poverty. All those who are made poor, whether they be the American black people, students, factory workers in France, or peasants in Alves' native country, Brazil, belong to the third world community. Alves recognizes the inadequacy of the term "community" to describe the world proletariat of Latin Americans, North American blacks, and university students throughout the world. His justification for using the term is based upon the common negative elements that unite the otherwise diverse groups. The new third world consciousness is created by outrageous conditions of poverty and most especially by an inability to create one's own history.[28] The new consciousness then becomes "critical," that is, it leads to a negation of the forces that keep it oppressed. This is the beginning of the liberation process.

Liberation is defined by Alves as a historical social event or process in which a subversive power "negates and stops the old in order to make room for the creation of the new."[29] This power is derived both from the historical community and from the power of God's love. The liberating process of the community may be viewed from three different perspectives: the political, the transcendent (faith), and the utopian, or the level of the imagination. We begin with the political perspective.

The dialectical process moves to overthrow the entire master-slave relationship in society. In the first phase or moment, the oppressed suffer the contradictions of the unjust society and hope for the day when the injustices will be overcome. The beginning of liberation is born in pain--the pain of frustration and despair because the factual condition of the imperialist domination and exploitation strips away any hope for a better future.[30] The oppressors, fearing the uncertainty of the future, resist anything that might wrestle the control of the economic and political structures from their hands. Since self-preservation is the highest priority for the ruling class, its decisions are based on class and national interest.

In the state of misery and hopelessness, those in bondage may risk trying to create a new future by negating the dominating social structure. They may engage in ritualistic activity, such as a hunger strike, a protest march, or an act of self-immolation, which has little affect on the transformation of an oppressive society. Alves refers to such acts as "magic." Whatever course of action is adopted --whether it be ritualistic or political in nature--Alves asserts that the oppressed alone have the vision, passion, and desire for helping themselves create a qualitatively new and just society for "tomorrow's child." The new creation is born out of the negation of the negativity in which the oppressed find themselves. Vision and creativity, he says, are qualities possessed by the slave and not by the master. On the one hand, suffering goads the slave to negate the present situation and to create something better in its place. On the other hand, the master conserves what he possesses out of his own self-interest. The master is not interested in the new which may endanger his possessions.

Alves' explanation of the process of liberation closely follows the master-slave dialectic of Hegel. According to Alves, the suffering which denies the possibility of a better future frees the slave sufficiently to risk his life in order to create the opportunity for him and his children to control their own destiny. Since the master is in control, he will do everything within his power to maintain what he already has. Hence, he is unwilling to risk. The slave, having nothing, is willing to fight by negating what presently makes him suffer. According to Hegel, the slave becomes the bondsman by an unwillingness to risk his life in order to win recognition. Later, when he discovers the true notion of freedom in the course of laboring for his master, he risks a conflict with his master in order to win his freedom. Hegel stresses the ideal of freedom as the motivating force behind the slave's radical action. For both Hegel and Alves, there is a negative and a positive aspect to the new consciousness. The negative side is the pain and contradictions from being a slave; the positive side is the discovery that man is unfinished and therefore can become free. Insofar as Alves interprets the beginning of man's liberation as rising from man's new consciousness of himself, he is clearly more Hegelian than Marxist. A second point of agreement is that Alves, like Hegel, asserts that it is ultimately the slave's action that brings about freedom for both master and slave.[31]

The tendency to discuss ethico-political issues within a slave-master framework is characteristic of Alves. There are, however, some problems with this approach. The first problem is related to the creative power of the slave. Alves implies that the creative power of the imagination and power to create one's freedom are gifts possessed solely by the slave and not by the oppressor. But even a casual review of history would demonstrate that creative poets, visionaries, scientists, and scholars have arisen from many different socioeconomic classes, from wealthy as well as from poor classes. The point that Alves is trying to make is that the wealthy class has a greater tendency to conserve the order of things in order to preserve and even increase its wealth. This is probably true. But in trying to establish this point, he erroneously implies that creativity is the unique gift of one class of people.

The second and more serious problem concerns the relation between the new consciousness of the slave and the political practice of liberation. Alves does not clearly indicate how they are linked. Failing to define his term "political," he states only that politics is an exercise in freedom, that it involves power, and is conflictual in nature.[32] But what is political power and what is the nature of the conflict? His master-slave dialectic suggests that class conflict involves revolutionary activity. On the other hand, his statement that *everyone*, oppressors and oppressed alike, is called upon to participate in the political, liberating process does not suggest a Marxist-type of revolution in which the oppressors unite against, not with, the oppressed. Alves places more emphasis upon creating a new social theory for political transformation than upon defining the Christian's responsibility in bringing about more human social, political, and economic structures. If society is to be changed, he says, the power structure of the present society must be carefully studied in order to discover where the weakest link lies. Aided by a knowledge of the weaknesses and deficiencies within the power structure (interaction of the corporations, the military complex, and the scientific world), the theorists can then create a new model of social action which addresses the human problems and needs of the whole society. Alves maintains that there exists a gap between the theory of government and society and the actual functioning of the society both in the United States and in Brazil. Alves has joined a team of sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists who are experimenting with new models, new alternatives for the proper time when a new model can be implemented in his native country.[33]

In summary, Alves' treatment of the political dimension of liberation is disappointing. His master-slave dialectic model, when translated into political terms, is more like political planning than mass-based revolution. While his theological-philosophical language suggests radical action in terms of class conflict and mobilization of power, he finally seems to revert to an elitist policy of political and social planning for the future carried out by a select group of experts. Perhaps Alves' assessment is that a mass movement among the oppressed would be an impossibility at the present time because of the tight control of all revolutionary movements by the military government of Brazil. Whatever his reason, his theological model of transformation, which he refers to as "messianic humanism," even with its implications for radical change does not seem to be a revolutionary theology for the masses.

The more profound reason that Alves gives for the slave's taking the risk is found on the level of faith or religion. This is a second perspective or dimension of the liberating process. God, who participates in the weakness and suffering of the slave through his suffering servant, Jesus Christ, empowers man to negate the old and affirm the new. Secondly, since God actually shares in the suffering and weaknesses of the oppressed, He does not allow man to become apathetic toward his own suffering. "He [God] suffers even when the slave should suffer but does not."[34] God suffers because of man's oppressive condition, and because of his plight, God negates the negative (man's fear and apathy). In this sense, God is the ground of man's liberation, the liberator who stirs up an awareness in man's consciousness of his suffering and unfreedom and moves him to negate the negative. It is the cross of Christ which not only symbolizes man's hope, but effectively engenders it within the community of faith. God's power of love moves the community to participate actively in the sufferings of the present where the possibilities for freedom in the future are discovered.

> The community of the future, therefore, does not discover its futuricity because of an esoteric knowledge of the world of the future, but rather from its identification with the sufferings of the slaves, the outcasts, the hopeless and the futureless man, weak and impotent, the wretched of the earth. It is the Suffering Slave, who is present in the suffering of all the slaves in the world, who from Christ's suffering,

> finds the secret of and the power for the liberation of man. "Only in the depths of suffering and despair," Buber states, "do men come to know grace."[35]

This theological explanation of man's liberation is fundamentally a theology of the cross, and in some respects resembles Moltmann's interpretation of political liberation. By identifying with the poor, the sick, outcasts, and sinners, Christ suffers in history, and through his suffering declares the inhumanity of those powers which bring out the present suffering. The historic symbol of this identification is the Cross of Jesus Christ. Moreover, the suffering of Christ and mankind is the mother of hope in the sense that it becomes an act of protest against the negation and thus prepares for better possibilities in the future. On this point, Alves is in agreement with Moltmann. The difference between the two theologians arises principally over the question of how the historical present and the eschatological future are related. When Alves states om the passage above that future liberation is not discovered through "an esoteric knowledge of the world of the future," he apparently has Moltmann in mind. Elsewhere, Alves criticizes Moltmann for his failure to ground man's hope for a better future in the *present* condition of man. "Moltmann, however, does not start from the negation of the present but from the transcendental promise."[36] Gutierrez notes the same tendency in Moltmann's theology of hope, suggesting that it is not sufficiently rooted in man's historical experience, that is, in the history of oppression and in man's many potentialities.[37] The hope which overcomes death, Gutierrez says, must be grounded in praxis; otherwise, it is illusion. In defense of Moltmann, one should note that the criticism of both Alves and Gutierrez is based upon the former's earlier work, *Theology of Hope*. Since that publication, Moltmann has repeatedly stressed the importance of praxis and the necessity of political transformation of the unjust conditions of society as a concrete expression of hope. Gutierrez acknowledges this fact in a footnote. And yet Moltmann's theology does not completely escape this criticism. Even in his most recent writings, he writes about man's liberation through faith *prior to* experience rather than *in* experience. This difference between Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann on the notion of historicity is a crucial one and will be treated again in the following two chapters.

Rejecting the traditional theological languages which speak of the ultimate concern in eternity, God, and the salvation of the soul, Alves argues that man's ultimate concern is to be found in man's "existential center," or in man's fundamental biological, cultural, social values. The transcendence of God is in the midst of man's praxis. Transcendence, he says, is not manifested in a dualism between supernatural and natural, but in a dialectic "between the freedom which aims at the future and the structures which, either by inertia or open rebellion, want to preserve the present conditions of oppression.[38]

Alves' attempts to remove the dualism between the natural and the supernatural, between the sacred and the profane, are confused and seem at times contradictory. In one writing, he presents a modified form of Feuerbachian theology by changing man's psychological structure to a social and historical one. To the extent that theology is a creation of man, it is anthropology; but to the extent that it articulates a response to something outside man, it is transcendent.[39] But if it is outside of man, where is the transcendent? Alves gives no satisfactory answer to this question. In another writing (*infra*), he speaks of liberation and freedom coming from the Spirit in a miraculous manner. In the same article, he argues that the "people of God" is established by an act of creation. It is a positive reality, not formed by a negation. He seems to contradict what he had said in his *A Theology of Human Hope* regarding the negation of the negative by the world proletariat. Rejecting any form of scientific determinism as the explanation for the creation of the community of faith, he says:

> To be more precise, blacks will not create a world free from racial prejudice; the proletariat will not abolish the exploitation of man by man; women will not free the world from oppression based on sex; the good intentions of the Vatican and of the World Council of Churches will not emancipate the world, not even from religious infantilism; no nation will ever fly the flag of freedom and equality for all. There is no necessary connection between these social categories based on social determinism and the People of God. The community of freedom is a miracle.[40]

What Alves is saying here is that new life and freedom, which are the fundamental values of the new community of faith, will be brought into existence through some power that transcends man's efforts. This would seem to be the power of God, although he does not state it in this article. If this interpretation is correct, then Alves has worked himself into a contradictory position. Earlier he argued against a dualism between a transcendent power outside of history and man's creative power in history. Now he states a new position that the new social organization called the People of God transcends all human efforts.

Finally, we may look at the liberating process from a third perspective which is closely related to the theological perspective, the perspective of the creative imagination, which he sometimes calls "radical utopianism." Here we may be briefer because this perspective will be the focus of the following chapter. Aware of the negative connotation of utopia given it by Marx, Freud, and capitalists, Alves nevertheless maintains that utopian thought and language are essential for creating a new world and a new man.[41] A radical utopia is neither opium nor illusion, but a permanently open and unfinished society. It is "radical" because it gets back to the root meaning of the term; it is not "a day or a place, but a permanent horizon." Utopian thinking is imaginative thinking. In order to bring about a new and more just society, man must exercise his creative imagination. Imagination is a "function of reason that is dependent on man's spirit, on his power to move beyond the closed world of facts."[42] The process of the imagination, as we shall see in the following chapter, is closely related to the liberating process described above.

In summary, we have examined the process of liberation and have uncovered three different perspectives or dimensions of the process. First, liberation is a political process involving the emancipation of the oppressed from the oppressor. On this level, Alves emphasizes both the negative and the affirmative moments of the process. On the theological level, liberation is seen as the power of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Negation and affirmation have their parallel symbols in the cross and resurrection. In one writing, Alves seems to negate the creative efforts of man, which implies a dualism that Alves argues against in his other writings. The third perspective is that of the imagination, which also affirms the new and thereby negates the old. The connections between these three dimensions are loosely drawn. On all levels, he consistently states that the new society, religion, and the imagination are grounded in praxis, but that these realities are not scientifically determined. The theological model of messianic humanism includes all three perspectives. Alves understands theology as language. The theological language of messianic humanism is reflective, critical, and creative. In its *reflective* function, it explores the elements and possibilities of a new language of faith that would assist the community in understanding historical events, the structures of power within society, and the dominant values operating therein. As a *critical* language, it both negates the inhuman values and affirms those which lead to life and freedom. As a *creative* language, it attempts to articulate the ultimate concern of a people and to assist in bringing about a creative solution. Insofar as the goal of theology is to foster human liberation among the oppressed, it is a political theology. To the extent that it creates new possibilities for a people to become a free people, it is a creative theology--a theology of the imagination.

Gutierrez and the Process of Liberation

Gustavo Gutierrez, like Rubem Alves, is intent on creating a new theological language that gives a transcendent, political, and imaginative perspective to the liberating process. But the theological language is new not only in content but in method as well. His model, which we will call the "theology of liberation," is defined as a "critical reflection on historical praxis in the light of faith."[43] By "critical reflection," Gutierrez means a searching attitude in which the theologian finds out the social facts (that is, the needs and the practices of the people), questions the facts, and then reinterprets them in the light of faith, always with the intention of revealing and proclaiming a deeper meaning within a person's life and also with the intention of transforming the present existence to a life of greater brotherhood and justice.

In contrast to theology as wisdom which centers around spiritual growth, and to theology as rational knowledge which tries to achieve a synthesis of faith and reason, theology as critical reflection has a prophetic function. It plays the inverse role of an ideology. Whereas ideology rationalizes and justifies certain social structures and practices, critical reflection judges the same realities, thus preserving them from alienation and idolatry.

Critical reflection for Gutierrez not only expresses a concern for understanding what is going on, but is oriented toward practice. *Orthopraxis*, or doing the truth, must balance the traditional overemphasis on *orthodoxy*, or believing the truth. Theology as *orthopraxis* does not produce Christian activity but reflects on the activity or praxis of the day. This kind of theology follows praxis; it is a second step, rising at sundown. Theology as *orthodoxy* establishes theological premises from which pastoral activity is to issue forth. This kind of theology begins at sunrise, illuminating for its followers the way to lead the Christian life. Gutierrez recognizes the necessity and importance of this latter kind of theology but sees critical reflection as a necessary corrective.

Gutierrez adds another quality to the notion of "critical." Critical reflection includes the element of commitment. He has little patience for idealistic theologians who lack a commitment.

> We must put an end to certain types of theologians--since we are discussing the theme of Marxism and Christianity--we can call "idealists." That is, the theologians who have nothing to do with concrete commitment. No matter how much good will he has and how much St. Augustine he knows, this type of theologian will always be an idealist. At any rate, his theological perspective will be ideological. I am using the word "idealist" in the Marxist sense, because only theology and theologians in the heart of pastoral commitment fit the definition of true theology. No other type fits.[44]

His critique of the "ivory tower" theologians echoes the language of Marx. But precisely how does Gutierrez want the committed theologian to function? He does not elaborate. If his description of theology which begins at sunset is to be taken seriously, then it would seem that the theologian would spend at least part of the day in the market place and on the street observing, discussing, and interpreting. Commitment seems to imply that the theologian go beyond the church boundaries into the world in a spirit of openness to what transformations are taking place. Gutierrez' extension of the term "critical" to include the notion of commitment is a special use of the word. In ordinary usage, commitment and critical reflection are two different operations. One can critically interpret phenomena without necessarily being an advocate. Commitment involves a belief in someone or something. The commitment is to the liberation of oppressed peoples and to create a theology which assists in the process.

Gutierrez' principal work, *A Theology of Liberation*, is sometimes said to be an example of theological reflection on historical praxis in the light of faith. This is only partly true. First of all, aside from Chapters VI and VII in this book, which deal with the liberation process in Latin America, the approach that he takes is a traditional one, which makes use of scriptural exegesis, church documents, and philosophical writings. In the second place, the method of critical reflection operating in those two chapters is not *direct* reflection on the economic, political, and pastoral practice within Latin American countries carried out by Gutierrez himself; rather it is an *indirect* reflection on the studies of pastoral practice researched by others. Hence, his reflection could be said to be a secondary reflection. Moltmann's critique of Gutierrez on this point--that Gutierrez' idea to reflect on praxis is a fine idea, but that Moltmann does not see this being done in the former's writings--is for the most part true.[45] Most of *A*

Theology of Liberation is devoted to creating a *theory* of Christian praxis. Yet some chapters are an exercise in theological reflection on Latin American praxis by means of the direct studies and observations of others.

In defining liberation, Gutierrez distinguishes three levels, all of which are interdependent. Liberation is a single, historical process, although a complex one. Process is a dynamic, not a static notion. Hence, liberation is not a state of being free, but an ongoing struggle in which man "transforms himself by conquering his liberty throughout his existence and history."[46] It is one process although various levels can be distinguished: the political, faith, and historical dimensions.

Liberation on the political level expressed the desire of an oppressed people to work against the unjust structures and repressive forces which stand in the way of its being free. This demands a new political awareness on the part of the oppressed. The process of acquiring the new political awareness, which Gutierrez calls "politicization," begins by a study of the root causes of the unjust situation.[47] The change of a people's consciousness from naive awareness to a critical, political awareness no longer understands things political as those which some elite citizens carry out in their leisure time. Nor is it a well-defined area of life in which elected officials administrate over public affairs. Politicized people understand that the political sector encompasses all of man's activity; they are committed to the construction of the *polis*, in which freedom is won and exercised and where economic, cultural, and social bases are established. Hence, the concept of "political" cannot be reduced to "an orientation to power," as Max Weber defines it. For Gutierrez, the political sphere is based on "the profound aspirations of man, who wants to take hold of the reins of his own life and be the artisan of his own destiny."[48]

Gutierrez' understanding of "political" as including all social relationships is the field where the politicized man directs his labors. His new awareness gradually abandons a simple reformist attitude toward the present social structure. He knows that he must attack deep causes in order to bring about social change. This involves supporting social revolution in order to abolish the status quo.[49] This inevitably leads to confrontation and conflict with the dominating forces within one's own country as well as with other nations and international businesses and coporations which depend on the stable government in order to reap their

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profits.

> They [Latin Americans] believe that there can be authentic development for Latin America only if there is liberation from the great capitalist countries, and especially by the most powerful, the United States of America.[50]

Liberation on the political level has the following characteristics: universality, radicalness, and conflict. Serious questions pertaining to each of these characteristics arise. On the element of universality, one must first note the obvious fact that most Peruvians are not politically aware of the domestic and international exploitation that exists, nor are they interested in participating politically. Gutierrez acknowledges the fact, but thinks that the process of conscientization is well begun. Precisely how a greater political awareness will develop within the poorer classes is not discussed, although Gutierrez alludes to the hopeful possibilities springing from Paulo Freire's educational program of conscientization. What needs to be shown is how a cultural program such as Freire's increases the political awareness of a people.

Second, Gutierrez' element of universality, which defines the political realm as including all social relationships, renders the term so elastic that it destroys some of its meaning. One's ordinary social relationships (family, friendships) are not political in the sense of making use of power and conflict in order to gain equality and representation. While there are many political dimensions to a religious congregation (division of classes, use of church for political propaganda, etc.), it would be doing an injustice to religious bodies or communities of faith to simply brand them as political. Jacques Ellul sees politicization in the sense that Gutierrez seems to be using it as an illusion. According to Ellul, politicization views everything as political and that political affairs are on everybody's level so that everyone is capable of dealing with them.[51] Gutierrez would seem to be guilty of Ellul's criticism when he writes:

> It [human reason] has become political reason. For the contemporary historical consciousness, things political are not only those which one attends to during the free time afforded by his private life; nor are they even a well-defined area of human existence. . . . It is the sphere for the exercise of a critical freedom which is won down through history. It is the universal determinant and the collective arena for human fulfillment. . . . Nothing lies outside the political sphere understood this way. Everything has a political color.[52]

Gutierrez, of course, does not ascribe to the political sphere all of human existence, even though "everything has a political color." The political, while pervasive of all human relationships, is one level of a much larger universe. The cultural level and the Kingdom of God, although they are related to the political dimension, are not identified with it. Nevertheless, his ascribing universality to the political opens him to Ellul's criticism which questions the mentality that asserts that all problems can be solved on the level of politics and that everyone should participate in their solution.

Regarding the other two properties of political liberation (radicalness and conflict), Gutierrez recognizes that the class struggle is a fact and that the classless society in some form of socialism is desirable.[53] At the same time, he sees different strategies and tactics being adopted by various nations. In Latin American countries, socialist models of change seem to be the mechanism for dealing with the social problems. Gutierrez' response to socialism is positive, but he stresses that the principles of socialism must be creatively adapted to the unique life and culture of a country. Whatever model of society is adopted, Gutierrez recognizes that conflict, even of a violent nature, cannot be avoided, as an oppressed people strives toward liberation.[54] He does not, however, discuss the moral questions related to the use of violence.

Gutierrez fails to give examples of current, practical strategies in Latin America. On the basis of his writings, one is left with the impression that there are simply small resistance movements within the churches. Voluntary associations or parapolitical organizations created in order to mobilize people for the purpose of changing unjust laws or discriminating institutional practices apparently are not a reality in Latin America.

At the deepest level, which is the level of faith, liberation means being set free from sin and united in love with God and with one's neighbor. To speak of sin as the ultimate cause, Gutierrez insists, is not to deny the political structures and objective determinants which have brought about the oppressive situation. This unjust situation does not occur by chance. Behind unjust structures are irresponsible persons or collective will that have turned against God and their neighbor by means of their corporate decisions. In discussing the social dimension of sin, Gutierrez draws out the implications of his theological principle, that the process of liberation as the process of human history is a single process which is differentiated into many levels. Since sin is an intrahistorical reality and even a political reality, liberation from sin presupposes political liberation. Conversely, all authentic political liberation in a certain sense is liberation from sin. Sin is the failure to love another, that is, a failure to create bonds with other people. When bonds between people are created or destroyed, political relationships are affected. Human love and sin are not abstractions, but concrete realities existing in human structure and practices.[55]

The positive aspect of liberation on this level is freedom to love. Following Bonhoeffer, Gutierrez emphasizes liberation as "freedom for others," which asserts that freedom is a relationship between two or more persons.[56] Once again Gutierrez brings out in his definition of freedom the social over against the individual element. Being free, according to Gutierrez, means being able to go out of oneself and beyond the social structures that support selfishness. Freedom is essentially a gift from Christ to be open to others. The sign of a person's freedom is his love for God expressed through love of one's neighbor. This is so because a person who opens himself to an another is at the same time breaking away from his egoism and creating a bond between himself and the other.

Liberation on the historical level aims at the creation of a new kind of person with a new society. Whereas political liberation signifies an awareness of the root causes of injustice and a concrete commitment to uproot them, historical liberation effects a change in the person himself. Assuming conscious responsibility for his own destiny, man "makes himself" throughout his life and throughout history by allowing all of his potential to develop as he gradually works toward a new freedom. This dimension probes into the meaning of liberation in greater depth than does the political in the sense that it looks beyond political awareness and social transformation in the *present* to a new kind of person and a radically transformed society in the *future*. This is the level of utopia, or the creative imagination, which mediates between the politican and faith levels.[57]

Just as liberating activity on the political and faith levels are salvific, so man's creative activity on the utopian level, which is directed toward the liberation of all people, is likewise redemptive. Creation is essentially linked to salvation. The act of God's creation sets in motion man's struggle toward liberation. Creation is the action of God in history. Man, who is the center of creation, continues God's saving work. Thus, the God who frees is the God who creates. Likewise, to work to create a new world, to become a person, and to build a human community is at the same time to save. There is no "distinction of planes," a separation between the supernatural and the natural or between the sacred and the profane. Gutierrez demonstrates his thesis on secularization--that there is only one history, a "Christo-finalized" history--by tracing the creation-salvation relation and the eschatological promises in the Bible.[58] Regarding the creation-salvation relation, he argues from both Old and New Testament sources that God's act of creation is the first salvific act and that man, who is the crown and center of that creation, is called to continue God's creation through his labor and by rebuilding society. By continuing the work of creation, man "forges himself," liberates and is in turn liberated and saved. Thus, for Gutierrez creation and redemption are aspects of the same reality.[59] Regarding the eschatological promises, he argues that the promises are an intrahistorical reality dealing with peace, justice, love, and freedom. But while these promises are being fulfilled within history, they cannot be identified fully with any one historical age or event. The eschatological dimension, with its stress on the provisional nature of accomplishments in the past, its concern with the present, and its openness toward "total communion of all men with God," forms the theological foundation of imaginative or utopian thinking. The encounter with the Lord's promises involves a break with the past and movement toward something new that exceeds a people's plans and suspected possibilities.[60]

In summary, we have presented the basic definitions and the three interdependent dimensions of the liberation process developed by Gutierrez. In his liberation theology, there is a serious effort to integrate the theory of Christian belief and the social practice of Christians. We single out two of these attempts for comment. The first is Gutierrez' consistent stress on the importance of praxis for theology. Pastoral praxis is the first step; theological reflection is the second step. This emphasis is built into his theological method so that theology becomes a critical reflection on praxis. Gutierrez' use of the term is ambiguous. He needs to define it, distinguishing it from the Marxist use, which precludes any notion of God's gratuity entering into the transformation of social conditions.

The second attempt at integrating theory and praxis is found in Gutierrez' principle of secularization. His reaction against verticalism, or the two-planes theory, is consistent with his description of theology as critical reflection on praxis. For if liberation is the historical

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realization of the Kingdom of God, and if there is no sector of human existence which is not penetrated by God's grace, then it would follow that a critical reflection on human activity would reveal God's gratuitous action. The activity need not be liturgical activity or the deliberation of the College of Cardinals; ordinary acts of kindness and justice will do. Therefore, a theology which reflects on historical praxis assumes that there is not a sacred domain apart from the secular realm, but one human domain, which is the milieu in which salvation history occurs.

The principle of secularization, which grounds Gutierrez' theology, is a thesis that has developed in recent years largely through the efforts of the Roman Catholic theologians, Henri de Lubac, Karl Rahner, and Edward Schillebeeckx. Gutierrez is indebted to them for this principle. In working out this principle, Rahner argues that action is not the consequence of knowledge or theory, but that knowledge is the event of self-consciousness which springs from action. Therefore, he argues, the truth of Christianity is to be discovered in human action, and most especially in the love of neighbor. Every truly human action is in some sense a confrontation with God.[61] Gutierrez, following this line of thought, says that a political liberating event *is* the growth of the Kingdom, and is therefore a salvific event, although it is not the whole of the Kingdom.[62] From this it would follow that acts of political liberation are at the same time acts of faith because existence and growth within the Kingdom is a life of faith. What Gutierrez must show, especially within the context of revolutionary activity, is the relevance of Christian faith. If truly human and liberating political acts are at the same time acts of faith, is there a necessity for an explicit confession of faith and for a church to proclaim the articles of this faith?

Moltmann and the Process of Liberation

Moltmann concurs with both Alves and Gutierrez in that for him liberation involves freedom through a transformation of political structures as well as through a change of heart or metanoia. "Liberation is a concrete event in which those who are bound, the oppressed, and the guilt-laden are freed from their chains, their oppressions, and their guilt."[63] The adjectives in this definition imply that the obstacles to freedom are both internal and external. A person may be physically bound and imprisoned and thus be unable to move around freely. Second, he may have freedom of movement but be unable to shape his own destiny because those who possess power over him legislate and execute unjust laws which hinder him from determining his own destiny. Finally, a person or a class of people may be unable to live freely because of guilt that presses down on them. Corresponding to these forms of coercion are three freedoms: physical, political, and psychological, all of which are related.

Liberation includes not only a freedom from interior and exterior constraints, but a freedom to act or not act, to create new and just social structures, to laugh, sing, dance, and love.[64] In the context of revolutionary activity, Moltmann speaks of play and humor which are liberating because they are a rejoicing in one's existence and also an anticipation of what will be in the Kingdom of God. Writing of an experience in the United States in 1967, he says:

> In a very Christian student revolution in the United States I was deeply impressed that they could shake off the former compulsiveness and the old resignation and laugh at their opposition and themselves. They were "joyous revolutionaries." Even in martyrdom, a revolution can look like a process of the liberated; then the revolution transcends itself.[65]

Moltmann describes this kind of transcendent activity as a manifestation of faith, or a "revolution within a revolution," because it is free from the coercion to act; it rises above the realm of necessity, of fear and anxiety. "What does faith mean," he asks, "other than already here and now in the midst of the kingdom of poverty and necessity to begin realizing the future of freedom, love, and play?"[66]

One may begin to notice in Moltmann discussion of liberation a discussion that is not made by either Alves or Gutierrez; namely, the distinction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity, a distinction that is based on the theological principle of justification by grace alone and not by works. Activity in the realm of freedom is self-transcendent activity that anticipates man's complete freedom in the eschatological kingdom. Activity undertaken under any coercion is necessary activity--a work. Although Moltmann again and again stresses that faith unaccompanied by political transformation of alienated conditions is an illusion, or an opium, he also points out that revolutionary activity without faith is an illusion. This is the reason Moltmann is impressed by revolutionaries who can laugh at themselves and at their opposition; laughter manifests a self-transcendence, which is an expression of faith. Speaking on another occasion of revolutionary students in Germany, Moltmann says:

> I like these restless and rebellious students. They are more courageous and risk far more than we did in

> the postwar period. What troubles and worries me, however, is that once they become active politically they often give up their faith. This is the old German dilemma: pious students do not protest, and protesting students want nothing more to do with Christianity.[67]

There are two norms operating in the liberating process for Moltmann--the political transformation of society and the belief and hope in the God who justifies and liberates. But clearly the more fundamental norm is the latter, even though the latter by itself does not lead to full liberation. By way of contrast, Gutierrez does not make this faith-works distinction, although he would hold that faith and grace penetrate all truly human works. For Gutierrez, all activity is salvific if it is directed toward personal and social liberation.

The question of who is to be liberated is an important one for Moltmann. Speaking at a conference on hope, he says:

> Whose future do you mean? *Cui bono?* Whose hopes are we giving an account of? In concrete terms we speak of the "first world," the "second world," and the "third world"; and their hopes are very different.[68]

Moltmann's question *Cui bono?* is the first step in his method. It helps the theologian to become very concrete by focusing on a specific people with specific problems and goals. Moreover, it cautions the theologian against extrapolating a future good for a people before critically examining one's own interest.

Moltmann has always expressed an interest in the problems of third world nations.

> The proletariat of contemporary humanity is not the workers of the progressive industrial nations but the peoples of the third world. It is here that Karl Marx's categories of alienation and revolutionary hope prove appropriate.[69]

All people who are victims of economic exploitation, political dependence, and racial discrimination are to be liberated. Like Alves and Gutierrez, Moltmann calls for an identification of the Christian churches with the cause of the oppressed, becoming actively engaged in trying to remove their oppression and alienation. In siding with the oppressed, the churches manifest an attempt to remove all barriers between people by abolishing the master-slave relationships that exist today.[70] This identification principle is a concrete extension of Moltmann's theology of the cross, in which the work of the crucified God is the freeing of the humiliated, the forsaken, and the oppressed. Consequently, all Christians are to identify themselves with the suffering as did Christ, who was himself humiliated, forsaken, and oppressed in his death.

In Moltmann's theology, as in the theologies of

Alves and Gutierrez, there are at least three distinct levels or dimensions of liberation: the political level, the faith level, and the level of the productive imagination. We will briefly describe the first two, leaving the third for our discussion in the following chapter. For Moltmann, all theology is political. Dogmatics implies an ethics; theory is directed toward practice. But his notion of the term "political" is very comprehensive, even more so than Gutierrez' notion. The field of politics for Moltmann "designates the extensive field of constructive and destructive possibilities of the appropriation and utilization of nature's powers as well as of human relationships by human society."[71] The field of politics includes both the destiny of man and the destiny of nature. Political theology stands between the eschatological message of freedom proclaimed in the gospel (the dimension of faith) and the sociopolitical reality and the reality of nature. Its task is to determine whether and how the message of the one reality is being made present to the other. Political theology asks, for example, whether a religious opium is being preached to the people, or whether the Christian message is a genuine proclamation of freedom. The theologian then interprets whether the proclamation is really freeing man from the coercions of contemporary society. His interpretation should help raise the awareness of a people to discern the forms of oppression. This is similar to the "politicization" process in Gutierrez' theology, and yet quite different in some respects. The elements of universality and criticism are present in both systems of political theology. Both theologians recognize the conflictual aspect in the liberation process and insist that the churches and the theologians should be identified with that process. They differ on the starting point for the theological enterprise. According to Gutierrez, the necessary and privileged locus for beginning reflection is participation in the struggles of the oppressed people. Political theology develops afterward from reflection on the actual participation. For Moltmann locates the theologian somewhere between the proclaiming church and the political arena. But dogmatics comes first; theological reflection within the *polis* follows.

Moltmann bases his liberation through faith on his theology of the cross. On the level of faith, liberation involves a conversion to a life of righteousness and truth and a liberation from anxiety, dread, and oppression. This conversion gives a person the conviction that even in the very depths of suffering and death, the crucified God stands before him, going ahead and giving him hope. Man is unfree most profoundly, not because of political oppression, but because of his sinful state, which manifests itself by a deep fear and anxiety about his life. He is at odds with himself, wavering between self-assertion and self-hatred.[72] Through faith in the promise of the crucified God who has been raised from the dead, man comes to accept himself as he is. Gaining in confidence and trust, he gradually casts off his fear and anxiety. When man gains freedom through faith, he does not retire to the inner world of his consciousness, but is drawn out of himself to assess critically the world situation of poverty and oppression, to raise questions about the values of society, and to transform it.

In summary, we find in Moltmann's liberation theology an extension of his theology of hope, which develops the notion that God awakens in man a hope for the new through his promise. Once man is aware of the new possibility and liberated from anxiety and fear about one's life, he is led to protest against the very realities that make people anxious and fearful and poor. The point of convergence between the transcendent promise and the political is the cross of Christ which is present in the vicious circles of death. Moltmann's stress on the liberation from guilt and anxiety and fear seems to separate his theology from those of Alves and Gutierrez who stress more (and almost exclusively) the political liberation from oppression. While Moltmann consistently argues for a theology that speaks on behalf of the poor, humiliated, forsaken, and oppressed, there is less urgency in his call for transforming the structures than there is in Gutierrez' writings. This is probably due to the different backgrounds and interests of the two theologians. Moltmann views oppression and liberation from a larger world perspective. Gutierrez is more closely identified with one people, most of whom have been living under oppressive conditions for centuries.

Notes

[1] Thomas W. Ogletree, "From Anxiety to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Theological Reflection," *New Theology No. 6*, ed. with an Introduction by Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1969), pp. 35-65; cf. also "Christian Realism: Retrospect and Prospect," by John C. Bennett, Harvey G. Cox, and others, in *Christianity and Crisis*, XXVIII (August 5, 1968), 175-190.

[2] Ogletree, "From Anxiety to Responsibility," pp. 35-65.

[3] Paul Tillich, *On the Boundary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), p. 86.

[4] Cox, "Christian Realism: Retrospect and Prospect," p. 180).

[5] Thomas W. Ogletree, Introduction to *Openings for Marxist-Christian Dialogue*, ed. by Thomas W. Ogletree (New York: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 27.

[6] Marty and Peerman, *New Theology No. 6*. The entire issue is devoted to the theology of revolution.

[7] Philippe Maury, "World Conference on Church and Society Message to the Conference," *The Ecumenical Review*, XIX (January 1967), 59-76.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

[9] Roger Mehl, quoted by Maury, *ibid.*, p. 68.

[10] Joseph Comblin, "Liberation in Latin American Christian Thinking," *Revue Nouvelle* (May-June, 1972), reprinted in *The LADOC "Keyhole" Series* (Washington, D.C.: Division for Latin America), pp. 3-14.

[11] Gustavo Gutierrez, "Liberation and Development," *Cross Currents*, XXI (Summer 1971), 246-247.

[12] Harvey G. Cox, quoted by Maury, "Church and Society," p. 69.

[13] *Camilo Torres: His Life and His Message*, ed. by Alvarez Garcia, John Restrepo, and Christian Restrepo (Springfield, Illinois: Templegate Publishers, 1968). This brief biography of Torres presents some background for understanding the Colombian national situation as well as a few of Torres' writings.

See also Leslie Dewart, *Christianity and Revolution: The Lesson of Cuba* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1963). This is a study of Castro's revolution and Cuba's move into communism, as well as the church's reaction to the revolution.

[14] Comblin, "Liberation," pp. 3-14.

[15] *The Church in the Present-Day Transformation of Latin America in the Light of the Council*, position papers and conclusions presented at the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops, Medellin, Bogota, ed. Louis M. Colonnese (2 vols.; Washington, D.C.: Latin American Bureau, 1970).

[16] David Abalos, "The Medellin Conference," *Cross Currents*, XIX (Spring 1969), 132.

[17] *The Church in the Present-Day Transformation*, II, 48.

[18] Jürgen Moltmann, "The Christian Theology of Hope and Its Bearing on Development," p. 99; Rubem A. Alves, "Theology and the Liberation of Man," p. 85; Gustavo Gutierrez, "The Meaning of Development," p. 123. All three articles are published in *In Search of a Theology of Development*, hereinafter referred to as *Sodepax Report* (Geneva: The Ecumenical Centre, 1969).

[19] Jürgen Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, trans. by M. Douglas Meeks (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), pp. 23-24; see also M. Douglas Meeks, *Origins of the Theology of Hope*, with a Foreword by Jürgen Moltmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 146; and Rolland F. Smith, "A Theology of Rebellion," *New Theology No. 6*, pp. 140-141.

[20] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 32.

[21] Rubem A. Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope* (Cleveland: Corpus Books, 1969), p. 106.

[22] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, trans. and ed. by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1973), pp. 31 and x, respectively.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 176.

[24] Alves, *Sodepax Report*, pp. 78-79; see also Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, pp. 16-17.

[25] Jürgen Moltmann, *Der gekreuzigte Gott* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1972), pp. 308-312.

[26] Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, in *Karl Marx Early Writings*, trans. and ed. by T. B. Bottomore, and with a new Foreword by Erich Fromm (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 124-125.

[27] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 140.

[28] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, pp. 6-12, *passim*.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 176.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

[33] Rubem A. Alves, "A Theology of Human Hope," lecture given at the Council on Religion and International Affairs (New York: CRIA, 1971), tape recording; and James F. Conway, *Marx and Jesus: Liberation Theology in Latin America* (New York: Carlton Press, 1973), p. 81.

[34] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 119.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

[37] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 217-218 and 241 (footnote 33).

[38] Alves, *Sodepax Report*, pp. 78-79, 81.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[40] Rubem A. Alves, "The Hermeneutics of the Symbol," *Theology Today*, XXIX (April 1972), 49-50.

[41] Rubem A. Alves, "Some Thoughts on a Program for Ethics," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, XXVI (Winter 1971), 160.

[42] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 166.

[43] Gustavo Gutierrez, *Teología de la liberación, Perspectivas* (Lima, Peru: CEP, 1971), p. 31.

The original publication gives the following definition of theology: "La teologia como reflexión crítica de la praxis histórica a la luz de la Fe." The English translation is not accurate, translating "praxis histórica" as "Christian praxis" and "la Fe" (faith) as "the Word." See also *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 13.

[44] Gustavo Gutierrez, "Marxismo y Cristianismo," ditto reprint (Santiago, April 1971), p. 9; quoted by Conway in *Marx and Jesus*, pp. 139-140.

[45] Jürgen Moltmann, personal interview, Berkeley, California, March 4, 1974.

[46] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. x.

[47] *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 88.

[51] Jacques Ellul, *The Political Illusion*, trans. by Konrad Kellen (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), p. 12.

[52] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 47.

[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 273-274.

[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 48, 89, 108-109.

[55] Gustavo Gutierrez, "Marxismo y Cristianismo," *Cristianos Latinoamericanos y Socialismo*, trans. by T. Matt Garr (Bogotá: Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo e Integración de América Latina, 1971), p. 24.

[56] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 36.

[57] *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37, 232-239.

[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 153-168, *passim*.

[59] *Ibid.*, pp. 157-159.

[60] *Ibid.*, pp. 165-168.

[61] Joseph M. Powers, "Some Roots of Gutierrez' Liberation Theology in Recent Roman Catholic Theology," paper presented at a meeting of the Pacific Coast Theological Society, San Francisco, April 10, 1974, p. 3. (Mimeographed).

[62] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 177.

[63] Jürgen Moltmann, "Theological Basis of Human Rights and the Liberation of Man," *Reformed World*, XXXI (December 1971), 356.

[64] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, pp. 146-147.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

[67] Jürgen Moltmann, "Politics and the Practice of Hope," *The Christian Century*, LXXXVII (March 11, 1970), 288-291.

[68] Jürgen Moltmann, "Response to the Opening Presentations," *Hope and the Future of Man*, ed. by Ewert H. Cousins (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), pp. 55-59.

[69] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 130.

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 141.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 218.

[72] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Play*, trans. by Reinhard Ulrich (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 31-32.

CHAPTER IV

IMAGINATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO LIBERATION

Introductory Observations on Imagination

Having placed the liberation theologies in context by contrasting them with the "boundary-situation" and Christian realism theologies, and having discussed the concepts and various dimensions of liberation, we turn now to the task of showing the relationship between two essential concepts within the liberation theologies of Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann. These concepts are liberation and imagination. Liberation theology operates within an eschatological framework. This means that the promise of a new future forces its way into the present, denouncing the evil of the present and announcing new possibilities for renewal and rebirth. Eschatology looks forward, moves forward, and at the same time revolutionizes and transforms the present. Those living under oppression look to a future hope which will loosen the chains of bondage. The realization of the Kingdom is not only hoped for in faith, but anticipated by the imagination. "The stress on the eschatological future elevates the power of imagination and transcendent vision, to make way for the advent of new possibilities that are only now appearing on the horizon."[1] Thus. the imagination, empowered by the eschatological promise of Christ, can create images of the future.

This simple definition of the imagination--the power to create images of the future--is quite close to the definition of imagination that is generally accepted. Imagination is defined as "the power of forming mental images or other concepts not directly derived from sensation."[2] The key word as far as our own investigation is concerned is "directly." The images of the future are neither derived *directly* from sensation nor are they unrelated to the empirical present. If the imagination is too closely bound to the past or present, its images become imitation; if it totally severs itself from the empirical, it becomes fancy, illusion, or opiate. Here is precisely where the Marxist critique attacks the idealist utopians, who project visions of the future which have no bearing to present structure and human activity. Imagination which is both truly creative and grounded in the historical present increases the phenomenological range of people immersed in day-to-day problems. The creative images provide them with genuinely new alternatives of action as well as with new myths which assist them in making sense out of life. At the same time, the creative images or metaphors reveal the difference and qualitative distance between the *present* (what is and ought not to be) and the *future* (what is not, but which ought to be).[3] If the imagination performs these functions, it assists in liberating man from the here-and-now and from situations where no other course of action exists other than the one imposed on man by those who have power over him.

In developing the liberation-imagination relation from the writings of the radical utopians, we shall observe whether the function of the imagination is truly creative; that is, whether it presents something qualitatively new. Second, we shall see how the image is related to the present reality. Our question, which has developed out of the Marxist critique is this: Does the image or idea provide a possible alternative for man in his social, cultural, political, and economic existence? If it does, the imagination is liberating; if it does not, then it becomes another "opiate of the people."

Alves and the Imagination-Liberation Relation

The dialectical process of liberation involves the negation of the existing structures and the affirmation of the qualitatively new reality expressed in a new theological language. In order to bring about a new language, man must exercise his imagination, which Alves defines as "a function of reason that is dependent on man's spirit, on his power to move beyond the closed world of the facts."[4] Imagination becomes the turning point which changes man from a *fact* to a *factor*, that is, to a person who creates. He calls the imagination the "locus of *metanoia*" because it is the turning point at which a new type of consciousness is born, giving man the power to move beyond himself and to give birth to something that did not exist before.[5] Although the imagination is a function of the reason, which is usually associated with the intellect, it is seated in the heart, which is in touch with feelings. It is also directly related to man's ability to remember. Memory generates imagination by recalling what happened in history. It tells a people how liberation occurred and thus sets in motion man's restless heart to free himself.[6] Man's imagination also mediates between the present and the future. By standing outside the limits of the given, man is able to project a world which has a new shape. Stimulated by the memory of the past and by the feelings of pain of the present, man creates a vision of the future. In the act of creation, "man is able to experience 'ecstasy,' in the literal sense of *ek-stasis*--standing, or stepping *outside* reality as commonly defined."[7]

In creating a vision which transcends the given, the imagination functions as a form of critique of what is. The vision created not only expresses what could be, but in naming the new alternative breaks the spell of the present reality. It appears that Alves understands the imagination as a power that not only creates for the sheer joy of creating, but that indirectly makes moral judgments. In this sense, Alves maintains, the imagination has a normative function.

> The language of the community of faith, consequently, is an expression of imagination. It is not purely descriptive. A purely descriptive language transforms facts into values. Imagination, by rejecting the facts as its limit, expresses reason's transcendence over the given. Imagination is a form of critique of what is, an expression of negation. . . . A language created by the imagination is able to "name the things that are absent," and when it does this it breaks the spell of the things that are present.[8]

This short paragraph contains the main ideas of Alves regarding the function of the imagination and, therefore, deserves a closer examination. First of all, Alves sees the imaginative process taking place within a community of faith--the creative imagination is a social phenomenon, an exercise of the corporate imagination involving people who believe and hope in a transcendent power or being. Second, the double function of the imagination parallels the dialectical process of liberation; namely, that of negation and affirmation. It both names new realities and negates others. Third, the social imagination is normative in its saying "yes" to a new reality and "no" to the old. Finally, the language created by the imagination does not describe the same old reality; it goes beyond the facts. Language which is purely descriptive is not imaginative because it simply changes what *is* into what *ought* to be, or facts into values. In contrast, Alves says that the language of the community of faith creates new values which transcend the old. The last three points will be elaborated and taken in order.

To clarify the connection between the process of liberation and imagination, a synoptic view is presented in Figure 2.[9] Figure 2 indicates that the two movements have the same dialectical structure after the model of Hegel: (1) the negative moment, (2) the negation of the negative, (3) the affirmation. In the negative moment, we see both movements originating in suffering, in an emotional and

THE MOVEMENT OF LIBERATION	*THE MOVEMENT OF THE IMAGINATION*
1. The reality of the old as power used for self-preservation, against the new as violence. Causes suffering for those in bondage (Negative)	1. Stimulated by "unconscious groaning," suspicions, feelings that the world is not as it ought to be (Negative)
2. Freedom as power against the violence of preservation (Negation of the negative)	2. The images break the spell of the old value by presenting an alternative (Negation of the negative)
3. Freedom as power for creation of the new, for experimentation (Affirmation)	3. Creates images expressed in language, ritual, action (Affirmation)

Fig. 2. Dialectics of Liberation and Imagination

mental anguish that tells man that the state of affairs is not as it ought to be. Ray Hart's thesis that the imagination comes forth during "eventful" times in the world supports Alves' contention that the creative imagination is set into operation by suffering which jars one's being.

> Imaginative shock is the mental correlate of ontological shock. Ontological shock is a jarring of one's reality sense, the conviction that one's disposition is cheating himself of his ownmost possibilities of being. By that act, active imagination is thrown into gear in quest of just what those potencies are.[10]

In other words, suffering or unrest, whether it be due to persecution or a lifetime of discrimination, stimulates a person or a community to begin imagining a new and better

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life. In the second moment, the created image helps a community break out of its slave mentality. The very existence of the new image negates the old myth that dominates a people. In the third moment, we see the affirmative side of the new creation. It becomes embodied in language, celebrated in ritual, and executed in action. The close parallels with the liberation process suggest that for Alves the operation of the imagination is a liberation within the larger liberation process.

Regarding the point about the normative function of the imagination, Alves seems to be attributing a judgmental role to the imagination when he speaks of the imagination as negating reality by the image it creates. Judgment is ordinarily concerned with the truth or falsity of some reality, which can be expressed in propositional form. Alves does not seem to be concerned so much with moral propositions as he is with grand ethical theory that enables mankind to build a new and just society. A theory, as generally understood by a scientist, consists of a systematic set of assumptions, laws, and facts which explains certain phenomena in the universe. A scientific theory is verified when it adequately explains something in the world that hitherto has been unexplained. Following Thomas Kuhn on the development of scientific theory, Alves points out that the theory, expressed in a paradigm, is created by the imagination. Thus the imagination provides a model which explains new phenomena as well as the old reality. If the creative model adequately explains the anomalies, it is accepted as true.[11]

The imagination functions in a similar manner, Alves argues, when it creates a language of faith, a myth, or a social theory which explains how new social structures can liberate and humanize mankind. Its efforts are directed toward the future. Only when the model explains the anomalies of existence can it be said to be true. Hence, the expression of the imagination is tentative judgment. It provides an alternative, the validity of which is verified in the future. The criterion used to verify the new paradigm is its capacity to free man for life and for the future.

The third and final point under consideration is that the imagination presents an image that goes beyond the present facts. An objection to Alves' presentation of the social imagination is that it seems to be a projection that can only result in a fictional society. It does not seem to come to terms with the way things are within the political-economic world. In response to this objection, Alves would contrast the language of the community of faith with scientific language. While the latter operates exclusively within the world of facts, the former, while taking the facts into consideration, does not accept the facts as values. "It wants to destroy the facts that enslave man and to create new facts, now absent, that could make man free."[12] It is difficult to extend the dialogue without knowing what concretely are the facts which he wishes to destroy and which facts he would like to create. Unfortunately, Alves gives us no concrete examples of the facts, old or new.

Our objection may be moved one step further by asking whether Alves' movement of the imagination is grounded in praxis. According to Marxist philosophy, people begin to have the vision of what the new society will be like through involvement in the revolutionary struggle. The future society is not created by man through his ideas or images, which have no intrinsic or magical power to change anything. It is only by extrapolating the tendencies in the dialectic of the contradictions given in society that one can foresee what will take place. The revolutionary's role is to intensify the given contradictions in order to help bring it about.

Alves agrees that ideas, images, and change of consciousness have no magical power in themselves to transform society. He disagrees, however, with the position that the powers of the imagination and will, which are essential for a human act, are nonessential, or even worse, an opiate. Action creates being only if it is creative action. Otherwise, it leads to reaction and to reactionary government. In the words of Berdjaev:

> It is an illusion to believe that revolution represents a rupture with the old; what happens is that the old appears again with a new mask. The old slavery changes clothes, the old inequality is transformed into a new inequality.[13]

Utopias are essential because they present man with transcendent ideas which have a transforming effect upon the existing order.[14] The ideas and images must be implemented by action, however.

In attempting to evaluate Alves' notion of the imagination vis-à-vis the liberation process, we find some attractive elements and some deficiencies. His introduction of the imagination into ethical discourse as both a creative and critical power seriously challenges those engaged in moral discourse to examine the wider issues and values that are often assumed to be true. For example, a creative and imaginative ethicist will not be satisfied with merely

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evaluating the just and unjust practices within multinational corporations, but will raise deeper questions about the values and quality of life within a nation that tolerates and accepts the questionable international policies of these same corporations.[15]

Although Alves accepts the Marxist position that theory and praxis are the two ingredients of all true liberation, the dialectical operation of the imagination has idealist elements. His principle that the naming of things absent breaks the spell of things present is not, however, an exercise in free fantasy. Following Wittgenstein, Alves views language as the expression of the self-understanding of the community in relation to the world: its consciousness, values, and identity. As the horizon of the community's world expands through new experiences, words are created to describe the new event. When a group of people or a nation discovers new things about itself in relation to the world, it redefines its self-understanding and identity in a new language.[16] This redefining process is the function of the creative imagination, which does not function *in abstracto* but in the light of new events. We accept Alves' development of the imagination up to this point. Where he is deficient is in his failure to indicate the relation between the new self-understanding and identity, now expressed in a creative language, and the practical transformation of social structures within society. Marx' sixth thesis against Feuerbach is applicable in part to Alves: "Feuerbach, not satisfied with *abstract thinking*, appeals to *sensuous contemplation*, but he does not conceive sensuousness as practical, human-sensuous activity."[17] Alves, like Feuerbach, is not satisfied with the abstract and rational thinking of Hegel, and therefore incorporates into his notion of the imagination the powers of the will and the emotions and feelings, which are in contact with the world. Feuerbach, too, stressed the wholeness of man, including man's affective powers. But he failed to see that the sensory world around him was the product of a social situation, which in turn must be transformed by revolutionary activity. While Alves understands the social construction of reality, he, like Feuerbach, fails to translate the transformation of consciousness into transforming social practice.

Gutierrez and the Imagination-Liberation Relation

As we mentioned in Chapter III, Gutierrez perceives the liberation process on three distinct levels: political, faith, and historical. Liberation on the historical level aims at the creation of a new man within a new society. It mediates between the other two levels. If radical transformation of the structures of society may be called "political" liberation, transformation of man and society on this level may be understood as "cultural" liberation. It is also referred to as the level of utopia. Utopia, which Gutierrez also refers to as the level of the creative imagination, has the primary characteristics of being subversive to history, and as such is its driving force. Gutierrez attaches three elements to the concept of utopia. First, it is related to historical reality; second, it is verified in practice; third, it is rational.[18] Each of these elements will be explained.

First, utopia is related to the historical situation. It does not deal with illusion. Contrary to current usage, a utopia rises out of a real historical society, emerging most often during times of crisis. Dehumanizing conditions cause people to suffer and thus ignite new possibilities in the imagination of members of society. We have observed essentially the same idea in Alves' explanation of the imagination. Borrowing the language of Paulo Freire, Gutierrez argues that the feeling of discontent with the state of affairs causes people to denounce the existing order and to repudiate the dehumanizing situation. At the same time, the discontented people begin to propose alternatives to the present situation. He calls this practice "annunciation," a proclamation of what is not yet, but what will be because it is desired by the people. The annunciation, which is a product of the creative imagination of the people, brings forth new possibilities for the present historical society. It is not a return to a paradise which has been lost nor a movement toward a future which has no connection with the present. The new image rises out of the empirical situation and is not simply a product of man's consciousness. The annunciation presupposes a rejection or denunciation of the present. By defining what is desired, the people rule out what they do not desire.

The second element of utopia insists that what is announced can only be achieved in the praxis. If the utopia does not lead to action, it becomes an illusion or opiate. Concretely, this means creating more human living conditions within the society and greater possibility for the people determining their own destiny. Gutierrez insists that what has been imagined must be verified and implemented by action.

The third element belongs to the rational order. Utopia, contrary to some technocrats and revolutionaries, does not lie outside of the scientific world. A scientific investigation may lead to an impasse in which a solution to the problem cannot be found. At this point, either through serendipity or by a more conscious "fooling around" with new approaches to the problem, the creative imgaination constructs a new hypothesis to solve the problem. In this way, utopia may be viewed as a prelude to science. It provides a way out of its limited situation. "The transition from the empirical to the theoretical presupposes a jump, a break: the intervention of the imagination."[19]

Utopian thinking, or the creative imagination, mediates between the levels of faith and the political. At the most profound level, faith reveals the deep meaning of the history which man is creating. The Gospel teaches man that, while he should strive for justice for all men, he should not identify the kingdom with any one historical stage. Revolutions should not be absolutized. Utopia responds to this message by asking questions, by denouncing unjust structures, and by imagining realities and human relationships that are more just and loving. In so doing, man is acting against selfishness and is moving toward communion with God and a greater solidarity with all men. It does this by radicalizing man's commitment to liberation. Man is focused on that goal. Second, utopian thinking provides a critical and rational element. It devises a theory of society, a human plan for implementing the new ideas, and in so doing, it prevents the Christian faith from falling into idealism.

Political liberation further concretizes both the level of faith and the utopian level by trying to implement the new values and ideas within social structures. It attacks the root causes of injustices within the system. It draws forth creative ideas from the second level and power from the transcendent dimension, which safeguard it from engaging in any kind of bureaucracy or sectarianism.

In summary, utopia, or political imagination, has the humanization of man as its goal, which it tries to accomplish by fighting against idealism or spiritualism on the transcendent or faith level; and against political-religious messianism on the level of science and politics.

To understand better the dynamic relationship of these three dimensions, and in particular the mediating function of utopia, one must know what Gutierrez' stance is toward Marxism. In an address on "Marxism and Christianity," delivered at a conference in Santiago, Chile in 1971, he distinguished four types of relationships between Marxism and Christianity. Among those uncommitted to revolutionary activity, there is either (1) total rejection or (2) dialogue on the nature of humanism. The latter is the kind of dialogue sponsored by Roger Garaudy and others who stress the "young humanist Marx" rather than the economist-political strategist of *Capital*. The dialogue usually involves tracing Marx back through Hegel, Luther, and the Bible, but in the end, one is still faced with the theistic-atheistic barrier. Among those committed to revolutionary change, (1) some seek for points of convergence; (2) others believe that Marxism and Christianity are simply two different realities without being contradictory to each other. Louis Althusser, who is the spokesman for this latter type, speaks of Marxism as a science, and draws a heavy line between faith and science.[20]

Gutierrez finds Althusser's type the most fruitful, but his acceptance is not without reservation. He accepts the distinction of Marxism as science and religion or faith as relating to forgiveness of sin and union with God and neighbor. But Marxism (even the Marx of *Capital*) has an ethical thrust, and Christianity has a political dimension. The science of Marxism and the faith of Christianity meet on the level of utopia, or the creative imagination, to the enrichment of both. One corrects the ideological tendency of the other. In this way, Gutierrez draws from three of the four types: humanist dialogue, search for convergences, and recognition of Marxism as a science.[21]

Gutierrez indicates a sensitivity to three dangers in constructing a liberation theology. First, he wants to avoid a dogmatism or spiritualism that can be perpetrated by science or religion. Second, he fears a Christian ideology of political action that becomes a form of interest-group sectarianism lacking both a historical perspective and a truly transcendent dimension. Third, he wants to prevent a naive application of the gospel message to the political situation, an error made in the social gospel movement in the United States. He attempts to avoid the first two pitfalls by consistently demonstrating the dynamic interaction between science and politics, on the one hand, and theology and religion on the other. The third pitfall can be avoided, Gutierrez argues, by avoiding the temptation to seek norms for political action from faith. Political action and faith enter into a fruitful and correct relationship when both are directed toward creating a more free and human person who more and more assumes conscious responsibility for his own destiny.[22] The locus for this interaction, called utopia, demands the critical and rational talents of science, the commitment of faith, and the creative imagination which tries to create an increase in both productivity and human freedom.

Gutierrez very carefully and somewhat successfully tries to steer a middle course between the ideologies of spiritualism and materialism, and at the same time tries to reconcile the common effort and commitment of both Christians and Marxists to liberate man. To accomplish this, he identifies a third dimension of the liberating process which is neither politics nor faith but a somewhat ambiguous dimension which he calls utopia. Its goal is the creation of a free, active, human person. Its powers are critical reason and the creative imagination. Finally, its resources are science and faith. Gutierrez' treatment of the imagination is skimpy. It becomes for him a functional concept which helps man synthesize diversity and to bring about a creative reconciliation between the diverse elements. He successfully grounds the operation of the imagination both in science and in praxis. At least he does this theoretically. What is lacking, however, is an illustration of how this level works in practice.

Moltmann and the Imagination-Liberation Relation

Moltmann expresses the function of the imagination as an anticipatory power. Standing between the Christian, eschatological message of freedom and the sociopolitical reality, man creates images and projects visions of a desirable future.[23] Hope is a source of man's creative imagination.

> The hope of faith must become a source of creative and inventive imagination in the service of love, and must release anticipatory thought that asks about the present possibility of man's life here becoming better, more just, freer and more humane.[24]

A second source for creative activity is pain and suffering, a point made also by Alves and Gutierrez. It is suffering encountered by people of faith in day-to-day living that stimulates a people to criticize the present evil conditions. The notion that new images spring out of man's desire to overcome his present misery is philosophically grounded in Hegelian philosophy and theologically in Moltmann's christology. According to Hegel, the new and better future arises in man's protests against the suffering he endures. The protests which lead to man's creatively transforming the conditions that foster the suffering brings about a more free existence. The negation of evil is not accomplished by either ignoring or avoiding or repressing it.

It must be faced head on, as Hegel says in the following passage quoted by Moltmann.

> It is not the life which avoids death and keeps itself free from destruction that is the life of the Spirit, but the life which endures death and maintains itself in spite of it. A person fulfills himself by finding himself in the midst of total desolation. He does not possess this power as something positive that ignores the negative, as we do when we deny something or say it is false, and then, finished with that, move on to something else. He possesses this power only when he stares what is negative in the face and continues to confront it. This constancy is the magic power that transforms what is negative.[25]

Hegel's idea of life overcoming the negative corresponds to Moltmann's theology of the crucified God. The realization of the new through the death of the old is the fundamental message that the Christ event has revealed to man. Crucifixion is the prelude to the resurrection. Man participates in the suffering of God. God is in man whenever man suffers out of love for someone. Such suffering is not simply enduring pain in a masochistic or apathetic manner, but is suffering out of love for others who are forsaken, humiliated, and oppressed. This kind of suffering, exemplified preeminently by Christ on the Cross, gives rise to the new hope and to new images of the future when man may be free and the existing unjust and coercive social structures may be transformed. The relation between suffering and the imagination is this. Whenever man participates in the cross of Christ by negating the evil of oppression, dependence, and humiliation, he begins to imagine what true freedom and humanity are.[26] In other words, one can imagine by means of analogy what the positive and desirable future may be by engaging in the struggle against evil. Moltmann's grounding the imaginative process in the cross echoes the boundary-situation theology of Barth and Tillich, which stresses the discovery of new possibilities at the outermost limits of man's achievements and strengths and where man suffers because of his weakness and sinfulness. This suggests that Moltmann's development of man's imaginative powers may not be emphasizing man's creative and active powers as do Alves and Gutierrez.

Productive and Reproductive Imagination

In his essay, *The First Liberated Men in Creation*, Moltmann more fully develops a theory of the imagination, relating it to the process of liberation. The process is dialectical in which the negative power of all forms of coercion are negated and the newness of freedom, life, and beauty are symbolized, demonstrated, and celebrated. Moltmann distinguishes between "productive" and "reproductive" imagination. Productive imagination has the power to anticipate "what can and shall be different" from the bonds of the present by experimenting with "free expression and with new human relationships."[27] Reproductive imagination seeks to recapitulate a value system of a past age or to simulate a pattern of the present-day world. More simply expressed, productive imagination creates new images; reproductive imagination imitates old ones. Reproductive imagination tries to go forward by looking backward or by looking to what already is.

Reproductive imagination is illustrated by the myth of the eternal return.[28] According to this myth, people return to the origins of antiquity in order to repeat the sacred beliefs. The return carries them into sacred space and time in which the people imaginatively participate in an elaborate ritual patterned on a past experience. Their reproducing this mythical experience is not for the purpose of liberation from the bondage of the past and present, but a return to the security of a paradise lost. Productive imagination, on the other hand, returns to the past only to translate the ideas and visions of the past into the present, and to build a better world for the future.

A second difference between the two forms of imagination relates to their respective goals. Productive imagination creates meaningful but purposeless activity. It does not operate for the sake of a goal, viz., to achieve something or to be someone. It is meaningful activity, however, because it has a liberating effect, and because its realization of freedom moves it to take pleasure in free, spontaneous activity and to demonstrate its value of simply being by celebrating. One who exercises one's productive imagination does so freely. No coercion or ulterior motive is involved other than one's fondness for expression and representation. In the expression of the imagination through an idea, a work of art, a game, or a dance, man transcends himself and his creation. Since man experiences freedom in this activity, he is enjoying liberation.

Third, activity issuing from the productive imagination is not only liberating because it gives pleasure, but also because this activity opens up new vistas, new perspectives for people. The new experiences become a critique of the way things are. This is illustrated by observing the function of the imagination in games.[29]

The Imagination and Games of Liberation

The discussion of games of liberation is situated in the context of those who are mourning and suffering with others because of the yoke of economic, political, social, and cultural domination. Can such people play games? "How can I play, when I'm in a strange land?" Moltmann sets out to answer that question. Is there such a thing as freedom in the midst of slavery, laughter in the midst of sorrow, and praising of God in the groaning of his creatures?[30]

Following his regular method, Moltmann first looks to games in society which alienate and dominate man (the negativity). He eschews the "enthusiasts" who have a purely aesthetic interest in the liberty of game-playing, while overlooking those unjustly imprisoned or those discriminated against. He observes still others who are initially willing to protest against unjust conditions in society, but in the face of stiff opposition, retire to the quiet spaces of their soul. This pattern can be observed in the Reformation period, the French Revolution, and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States.[31]

In order to develop a critical theory of games and to find out which games are alienating and which are truly liberating, he begins with his usual question, *Cui bono?* Whom does the game serve? True games ought to be meaningful in themselves and purposeless from an outside point of view. They should not be a a means to manipulate society. If games do serve outside interests and if they are used to dominate others, such games become alienating.

Moltmann's investigation of games is creative and consistent with his ideas of how new images are produced.

> We intend therefore to concern ourselves critically with the games of today starting with a critical analysis from the outside. This does admittedly constitute an approach foreign to an understanding of the game as self-forgetting pleasure. But it may be that our eyes are opened to the truly familiar only as we become alienated from what is alienating.[32]

One should note the creative process at work in the theologian. He critically looks for the "new" or the "truly familiar" by negating the negation--by becoming "alienated from what is alienating." The "truly familiar" is that which we recognize as true and good, the way something ought to be after the alienating element is unmasked and pulled away. Moltmann continues to describe his method: "We shall attempt to move from a critical analysis of games in terms of their outward appearance in society to a critical analysis of society in terms of an inside view of games."[33] In other words, one first looks at the game from the outside, and after understanding how it functions, one can use its true meaning to understand society.

A critical analysis of games from the outside reveals two basic types: games of dominion and games of liberation. Games of dominion are games which provide an escape-valve function to release pent-up pressures within people who live and work in an oppressive society. Those in control operate out of a version of the old dictum of Imperial Rome: *Panem et circenses*. Give the people enough bread and provide them with an occasional circus and they will be happy and will not riot in the streets.

> Triumphant conquerors at times allowed their soldiers to deride the vanquished with mocking songs. Modern dictators are fond of sponsoring sports events; they subsidize highly trained professionals with whom the people can identify and who can become an object of the people's pride. For the more peace-loving there is stamp collecting with a wide assortment of special issues in constant supply.[34]

In this way, the authorities control people by channeling their agression into games, thus paralyzing spontaneous feelings. Alves, noting the same phenomenon, speaks of it as a "domestication of the imagination." Games become an extension and simulation of the work process. Vacations from work and military leaves are extended, not so that the worker and soldier can re-create themselves, but in order that they might unwind and return to their duties to achieve more for the organization.

Thus, games become the opium of the masses. By controlling games, the authority within society can both restore a person's fitness for the demands and hardships imposed in work, military conscription, and by taxation, as well as dissipate the energy arising from the person's enslaved and alienated existence. But if a people were encouraged to engage in free and creative play, they would engender new and different ideas which eventually serve as a critique of their work and leisure pattern.

The authentic type of games, called games of liberation, are the fruit of the productive imagination. They are uncontrolled by the rules of larger society, allow for free spontaneity, and permit the participants to transcend the activities and values of the everyday world. Such games "go hand in hand with the ethics of indictment, protest, and demand." Wresting control of the alienated games of domination from the ruling interests by its own games, jokes, caricatures, and celebrations is the beginning of the oppressed class' liberation because it dissipates the evil bonds of fear. "Freedom begins when men suddenly find themselves to be without fear."[35] At the same time, games of liberation can humanize the revolution by instilling humor, pleasure, and balance--something very much needed, since revolutions tend to get caught up in the achievement-centered society which the revolutionary is attempting to overthrow. Thus, games of liberation, because they provide people with a critical perspective for change, can break the bonds of the status quo. Man's fears are abated and his action is made more human.

But games of liberation are only one dimension of the liberation process. How is this creative dimension related to the political dimension? The creative dimension expressed through its games of liberation should accompany positive, political acitivity which concretely works for a transformation of society. This latter kind of activity flows from a response to God's command to identify with and to serve those who are oppressed and forsaken. Whereas the value of the imaginative activity is pleasure or glory, the value of political activity is obedience to God's command. The expression of both values in play and work are necessary in the liberating process. The omission of one leads to an illusion or opium. If the value of beauty is overstressed, the moral system becomes an aesthetic illusion. Friedrich Schiller develops such a system. "The path to freedom leads through beauty," he says. This view is illusory because there is little impact on the political conditions which keep men in bondage. At the other extreme is the materialistic illusion of Marxism, which maintains that man is liberated by a transformation of the economic and political determinants. Another form of this illusion is legalism, a system in which man thinks he can liberate himself by his own works.[36]

In summary, liberation for Moltmann is a multidimensional process in which man becomes free from all forms of coercion. At the deepest dimension, man is called and liberated through faith and hope in the eschatological promise of the crucified God. Man's faith and hope are expressed in following the crucified Christ, which is the condition for realizing full freedom. Moltmann identifies two dimensions of man's liberating activity, both of which are expressions of his faith. The first is the political dimension in which the Christian, out of obedience to the Father, attempts to change unjust social conditions in society. The second is the aesthetic dimension in which the Christian expresses freely and spontaneously his joy in existence, thus giving glory to the Father. Both activities are liberating, the first because it attempts to remove coercion from social structures, and the second because it helps the social changer to transcend his own coercive tendencies. The two dimensions are dialectically related. The value of beauty, exercised by the free play of the imagination, keeps the value of obedience from deteriorating into legalism by stressing the joy that comes from the awareness of the beauty of God and from the awareness that one is free. Concrete obedience, freed from the purpose and necessity to justify oneself, is able to keep man's joy from being hollow by engaging in the transformation of dehumanized society.

Moltmann has the fullest and most satisfying treatment of the imagination of the three radical utopians. His distinction between the productive and reproductive operations of the imagination helps one to understand the difference between social change which is qualitatively diferent and change which is imitation of an old system. His notion of the productive imagination is more spontaneous and creative than the more functional description of the imagination presented by both Alves and Gutierrez, for whom the imagination serves almost exclusively as a critical power in service of political liberation.

Moltmann presents two sources for man's imaginative activity. These are the suffering of Christ and man's suffering as the first source, and the glory of the resurrection (God's sovereignty), reflected in man's play, as the second source. Moltmann fails to show or explain why creative or imaginative activity can be engendered by both the experience of negativity in suffering and the experience of beauty and pleasure in play. When he bases his notion of the imagination on his theology of the cross, he does not seem to have advanced beyond the development of Barth and Tillich. On the other hand, his new development of the creative imagination based on God's glory symbolized by the resurrection offers a fresh possibility for development.

Our final observation is that Moltmann's treatment of the productive imagination does not clearly demonstrate its connection with the present reality. According to Moltmann, one imagines something new in anticipation of a future promise. Creative activity, if it is truly liberating, does not arise out of the pain of anxiety, fear, or simple desire for adventure. It arises out of a response to God's Word. *Praxis* always follows *Logos*. If this is so, then Moltmann has not demonstrated adequately how creativity is grounded in historical reality.

Notes

[1] Carl E. Braaten, "Eschatological Ethics: Toward a Theory of Christian Ethics," paper presented at the Conference of the American Society for Christian Ethics, Richmond, Virginia, January 1973.

[2] A. R. Manser, "Imagination," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, IV (1967), 136-139.

[3] Carl E. Braaten, "The Significance of the Future: An Eschatological Perspective," *Hope and the Future of Man*, ed. by Ewert H. Cousins (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), p. 41.

[4] Rubem A. Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope* (Cleveland: Corpus Books, 1969), p. 166.

[5] Rubem A. Alves, "Some Thoughts on a Program for Ethics," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, XXVI (Winter 1971), 159.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 158.

[8] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 166.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

[10] Ray L. Hart, *Unfinished Man and the Imagination* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1968), p. 216.

[11] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 166; see also Thomas E. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

[12] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 167.

[13] Alves, "Program for Ethics," p. 164.

[14] Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, trans. by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1936), p. 205.

[15] Rubem A. Alves, *Tomorrow's Child* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 1-22.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

[17] Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *Marx & Engels Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. by Louis S. Feuer Anchor Books (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1959), p. 244.

[18] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, trans. and ed. by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1973), p. 232.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 234, citing Paul Blanquart, "A propos des rapports science-ideologie et foi-Marxisme," *La Lettre*, Nos. 144-145 (August-September 1970), p. 36.

[20] Gustavo Gutierrez, "Marxismo y Cristianismo," *Cristianos Latinoamericanos y Socialismo*, trans. by T. Matt Garr (Bogotá: Centro de Estudios para el Dessarrollo e Integración de América Latina, 1971), p. 24.

[21] Philip E. Berryman, "Latin American Liberation Theology," *Theological Studies*, XXXIV (September 1973), 375-376.

[22] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 36, 236.

[23] Jürgen Moltmann, "The Christian Theology of Hope and Its Bearing on Development," *Sodepax Report*, pp. 93-100.

[24] Jürgen Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, trans. by M. Douglas Meeks (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), p. 121.

[25] Jürgen Moltmann, "The Crucified God," *Interpretation*, XXVI (July 1972), 278-299.

[26] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p.3.

[27] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Play*, trans by Reinhard Ulrich (Evanston: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 12-13.

[28] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 21.

[29] Moltmann, *Theology of Play*, pp. 15-21.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 5

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 7

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5, 53.

CHAPTER V

VERIFICATION OF FAITH AND IMAGINATION IN PRAXIS

Marx' and Engels' Criticism of Imagination and Utopia

In Chapter III, the essential concepts and principles of liberation as expressed by three contemporary theologians were presented. The process of liberation was observed to be multidimensional in all three theologies, the dimensions being the social-economic-political, the imaginative or utopian, and the transcendent. In Chapter IV, the relationship between the imaginative dimension and the liberation process as a whole was more closely analyzed. There the purpose was to formulate how each theologian uses the concept of imagination or utopia as part of the liberating process. While some comparisons were drawn between the theologians' and the Marxist notions of liberation, the primary aim of the last two chapters was to interpret and evaluate the liberation theologies and to determine the relationship of the imagination to the process of liberation within each theological model.

In this chapter, the task is to apply the Marxist critique of religion as opiate to the various models of liberation theology and, specifically, to the function of the imagination vis-à-vis political liberation within each of the theological models. The criterion by which we judge whether the Marxist conclusion is applicable to the models is that of praxis. We ask whether the operation of the imagination as expressed in each of the theological models is related to Christian praxis; that is, does the new vision or utopia play an essential role in bringing about a transformation of the conditions of an oppressive society leading toward a greater liberation for all the people in society? If it can be established that each theologian's model of liberation satisfies this criterion, then it can be maintained that the Marxist dismissal of religion as opiate does not apply. If it cannot, then the dismissal obtains.

The problem may be expressed in this manner. While all three theological ethicists are striving to develop a theology which is both radical and liberating--a political theology which stresses the importance of relating the liberating message of the Gospel to the oppressive structures--they employ a language which suggests a return to the kind of utopianism criticized by Marx and Engels. While the theologians insist that theory (theology) and praxis are related, they do not integrate them by a direct application of theological principles to social practice, but indirectly by means of the imagination or utopian thought. In other words, the medium or vehicle by which general, theological-ethical theory is brought to bear on the concrete, ethical practice of liberation is imagination (for Alves and Moltmann) or utopian thought (for Gutierrez).

Marx and Engels label any attempt to change society by changing consciousness as "utopian," whether it be rational, voluntaristic, or imaginative activity. To entertain the notion that the basic structure of society (the economic and class structure) can be revolutionized by superstructure (philosophy, theology, or aesthetic activity) is, according to Marx and Engels, utopian. It is "unreal" (*ohne Wirklichkeit*).[1] The problem may be reformulated as a question. Is the function of the imagination within the liberation theologies of Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann essentially related to the socio-economic-political dimension of the liberating process, as well as to the transcendent dimension of faith? By an "essential" relationship, it is meant that both activities mutually influence one another and that one activity cannot change the structures of society without the other. If this essential relationship between these two dimensions is lacking, then, according to the hypothesis of the theologians, true and complete liberation cannot be realized. That is, if it can be shown that faith and the imaginative dimensions are superfluous, then Marx' and Engels' criticism would be applicable to them. Imagination would be still another opiate.

It will be recalled from Chapter II that Hegel understands man's quest for freedom and self-development as a dialectical process. While Marx accepts the dialectic and acknowledges Hegel's insight that man becomes authentic through the process of his own work, he objects to the latter's treating external objects as if they are essentially objects of consciousness. Alienation comes to mean for Hegel that the objective world is thought to be independent of man. The overcoming of alienation for Hegel is accomplished by realizing that objects are not really independent of man's consciousness, but only momentary stages of self-consciousness. In other words, consciousness or man's idea transforms the external objects (man's own activity, other men, the world). Through dialectical reasoning, the false picture of reality is negated, and very gradually truth and freedom emerge.

Over against Hegel's idealist view of history, Marx tries to demonstrate through his principles of dialectical materialism that ideas are dependent on practical activity for their origin and development. Ideas are sublimations of man's material life process. Furthermore, all ideologies and alienations are mere reflections of the socioeconomic structures of a society. Thus, Marx' and Engels' position is materialist and scientific. It is materialist because the production of man's consciousness and ideas is fundamentally conditioned according to the development of the economic forces operating in society.[2] It is scientific because it maintains that these economic laws are empirically observable.

Marx criticizes Feuerbach, even though the latter dissociated himself from Hegelian speculation and recognized man's need for nature and for other men. However, Feuerbach in the final analysis remains a theorist who deals with abstract man, failing to understand him in his given social and material situation. Hence, Feuerbach lapses back into idealism.

The theologians are not asserting that consciousness is able to transform the social structures through dialectical reasoning along the lines of Hegel's interpretation.

Rather, consciousness is able to create new visions of a new society, according to which the oppressed may work in very pragmatic ways in order to realize that vision. Nor do the theologians deal with abstract man, as Feuerbach does, but with specific social groups of people in Latin America, Europe, and Africa. They do not separate the dimensions of consciousness (imagination) and socioeconomic-political structure, as we have seen. The important issue between these theologians and Marx is whether the images produced by the creative imagination in the light of faith are "sublimates" of the material life process, as Marx consistently maintained.

> Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary this consciousness must rather be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production.[3]

The theologians maintain, even from their different perspectives, that a change in consciousness is not simply due to change in social structure but is also significantly altered by creative activity and by faith, hope, and love experiences, which may not be empirically verifiable according to the laws of science. In summary, we may say that whereas Marx and Engels collapse consciousness into economic reality, and Hegel collapses economic reality into consciousness; the theologians recognize both consciousness and economic reality as irreducible, yet mutually interpenetrating.

The crucial question is whether and to what extent creative activity, which the theologians maintain is able to transcend the scientific laws, has its own *observable* influence on the liberation process. Marx' and Engels' answer to this question can be surmised on the basis of their criticism of the socialist utopians of the early nineteenth century, principally St. Simon, Fourier, and Robert Owen. In the third section of *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels criticize these utopians for their failure to perceive the absence of proper economic conditions.[4] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, modern industry was still in its infancy. Serious conflict and antagonism between classes could not be generated until modern industry had developed gigantic productive forces.[5] Consequently, the proletarian class was not ready to commit itself to revolutionary action. Moreover, the utopians did not have a sense of class consciousness, indicated by their general appeal to society and particularly to the bourgeois class to act on behalf of those suffering. In appealing to society at large, Marx and Engels point out, the socialists in effect were appealing to the ruling class and hence were not truly representing the interests of the proletariat. Furthermore, the utopians rejected political and revolutionary activity, trying to attain their objectives through peaceful means by the force of example and experiments, such as Owens' New Lanark experiment with the great cotton mill.[6] This is not really historical action, say Marx and Engels, but personal inventiveness. Rather than helping to usher in historically created conditions of liberation, the utopians present "fantastic" ones; rather than wait until the proletariat spontaneously organizes itself, they contrive an artificial organization.[7] Finally, Marx and Engels criticize the utopian literature for inculcating "a universal ascetism and social leveling in its crudest form." By social leveling is meant the general appeal to all of society without distinction, an appeal which Marx and Engels suggest paves the way toward a new social gospel characterized by a social harmony rather than by class antagonism.[8]

The socialist utopians' theories of social transformation are similar and dissimilar to those of the radical theological utopians. The contemporary, radical theological utopians differ from the nineteenth-century socialist utopians in the following respects. First, the former do not appeal simply to the goodwill of society at large with suasive theological and ethical arguments about present injustices. They consistently maintain that Christians should identify with the plight of the oppressed and the suffering. While all three theologians recognize the reality of the class struggle, they differ among themselves regarding the direction and outcome of the struggle. Second, Alves', Gutierrez', and Moltmann's emphasis on creativity is not based on the reason of the Enlightenment but on creative imagination which functions as both protest and celebration. The point of agreement between both groups of utopians is that man can create actively new possibilities for changing society. Against this common view, Marx and Engels maintain that it is pure "utopia," something existing in the mind or imagination of the inventor and having little relation to reality. Genuine imaginative thought arises out of the expression of people's lives.[9] Therefore, personal inventiveness must give way to a critical analysis of the activity of men, particularly in their work. Structural change occurs by a transformation in the division of labor, which is brought about by a radical change in the modes of production. Thus, Marx and Engels reject as utopian all voluntaristic approaches in which thinking, willing, and inventing precede the critical development of industry, the proletariat, and the class war. However, they do assert that man plays an important role in the social transformation of society. First, he formulates the scientific laws and theory operating in the class struggle. Second, aided by the knowledge of the material forces at work, he then can act in accordance with them.[10]

On the basis of this critique of the socialistic utopians by Marx and Engels, especially on the point of "personal inventiveness," one could deduce how Marx and Engels might criticize the contemporary, although more radical, utopians of the late twentieth century. But we will make these deductions later, after the individual utopian models have been closely examined.

Alves, Imagination, and Marx

The Relation of Imagination to Praxis

Is Rubem Alves' theological paradigm of liberation, with its emphasis on the social imagination, related essentially to the socio-economic-political world? Messianic humanism is both an imaginative and historical language, based on the practical activity of men, and created by a community of faith which articulates its ultimate concern.

This language expresses a vision and thus mediates a new future to man.[11] Imagination is a power of the reason and of the heart to name things which have not yet come into being. The "things" or utopias created by the imagination of a community of faith are not "phantoms of the brain," but historical realities. History, for Alves, is defined in terms of social man in the present who is alive, suffers, and feels joy.[12] Man, who is the creative subject of his acts and who is able to negate the negative critically, is the agent of history. The relation between this imaginative language and praxis is expressed in the following proposition which will serve as the focus of the discussion: "Ideas and social practice are dialectically related; ideas originate in social practice, but ideas guide social practice."[13] By "ideas" Alves means images which are already present in more or less latent form in the practice and spirit of the community. They are not fixed ideas or dogmas. Nor are they completely determined by scientific laws. By "social practice" he means the ongoing activity, the needs, joys and sufferings of the people. It also refers to the forces of nature as well as to the objective structures of the world.[14]

Ideas and social practice are dialectically related. Praxis is the ground or basis for ideas, including utopian ones. Man's ideas are related to the events of the past. For example, the memory of the liberating events of a nation's past opens it up to possibilities of liberation in the future. Moreover, a community's memory of the past allows it to understand the provisional nature of the power of the oppressor.[15] Man's ideas and visions are spawned by the pain endured in the present. The concrete suffering caused by the social structures and policies of the ruling class serves as a stimulus for imaginative activity. For example, the poor in Brazil have suffered because of widespread undernourishment, high infant mortality rate, deterioration of the cities, and an increasing gap between the rich and the poor caused largely by the exploiting multinational corporations and the cooperating national government. This suffering has brought forth new visions of liberating education and a liberating church by such creative people as Paulo Freire and Dom Helder Camara. The factual situation has served as a point of negation and affirmation, a crisis situation when alienated people imagine a different and more humane way of living. It is in this sense that the idea originates from social practice.

The second moment of the dialectic is that ideas negate and then guide social practice. The image has the power and the dynamism to transform the present reality into a new and more human tomorrow. Guidance is possible because the new ideas transcend the normal activity and enable the community to evaluate its practice and institutions. The new idea, a product of the social imagination, criticizes practice and leads the community to transform its social structure. In summary, the idea is posterior to the practice because it arises out of action; the idea is anterior to practice insofar as it redirects it and gives it new meaning.

It is evident that messianic humanism, which is an intentionalist model, is fundamentally different from the model of dialectical materialism. The differences are these. First, while Alves agrees with Marx that ideas are created by action, the creative ideas for Alves transcend the practice of a society, criticize it, and direct it anew. In this sense utopian thought serves as a final cause, or an ideal, toward which the oppressed are striving in order to become more fully human. The ideal of messianic humanism is constituted by the two values of life and freedom. Marx repudiates the notion of an ideal, or final cause. The class struggle and the movement toward a classless society arise out of the empirical situation, that is, out of the inherent contradictions within the economic system of capitalism. As we have seen in Chapter II, Reinhold Niebur correctly argues that Marx' system does indeed have a goal toward which society inevitably is moving. This goal is the ideal of equality: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." The differences between Alves and Marx regarding the ideal is that, in the former's system, the ideal consists not only of the needs of *life* produced according to each one's ability, but also of the quality of *freedom*, the achievement of which is envisioned by the imagination working in concrete circumstances. Thus, the utopia which is imagined transcends the here and now. Alves maintains a double source for the ideal: the concrete *practice* of the people to transcend their situation through reflective *thought* which arises in the practice. Marx, on the other hand, insists that there is only one source, expressed by the scientific laws of dialectical materialism. Thought, will, or imagination do not transcend these laws; they only reflect them.

A second difference, somewhat related to the first, deals more directly with imagination and utopia. Since Marx and Engels insist that true thought and images must be a reflex of what is objectively given in the economic structure, mental activity which is not so grounded is labeled "utopian thought" and "false consciousness" in the sense that it is alienated from the real social being of the person. Alves acknowledges the presence of a "false consciousness" within certain intellectual structures, referring to them as "ideologies" because they inhibit change and try to preserve things just as they are. Utopias, on the other hand, transcend reality and break ties with the existing structures.[16] Alves criticizes the Marxist position because of its metaphysical assumption of the positivism of the nineteenth century, which assumes that the social processes have the same autonomy as natural processes. From this assumption the positivists, Marx included, argue that the human social processes are independent of man's will and imagination. Science becomes the savior of man's emancipation. The Marxist interpretation of history as a self-enclosed structure which changes in accordance with contradictions within the economic and class structure rules out the possibility of utopias. In his criticism of this assumption of positivism, Alves writes critically:

> The limits of the future are determined by the structure of the present. Starting from what is now, one may envisage a better, improved, stronger version of the present. But it will be only a new model--just like our cars.[17]

For Alves to identify Marx' system with positivism, which ushers in a "newer model" representing a change in quantity only, is not correct. A Marxist, socialist state, whatever one thinks of its inherent weaknesses, can hardly be considered simply as a different version of capitalism. One can argue, as some authors do, that the Soviet Union's socialist state, or even the socialist model of the People's Republic of China, are really only different forms of capitalism.[18] But that Marx' vision of a classless society is not a *qualitatively* different society even with its alleged positivistic assumptions is an inaccurate assessment of his thought. Alves' criticism of Marxism for its negation of man's creative role in changing the structures of society may be true. However, this is by no means a settled question among Marxist scholars.

A third and perhaps the fundamental difference between Alves and Marx centers on each one's understanding of freedom. Freedom, according to Marx and Engels, results from social man gaining control over himself and over nature, finally accomplished when he acquires knowledge of the

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laws of natural necessity and works in accordance with them. Engels states these key ideas on freedom, read and approved by Marx, in the following passage:

> Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence of natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends. . . . Freedom therefore consists in the control over ourselves and over external nature which is founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development.[19]

The important words in this quotation are "knowledge of natural necessity." The secret to freedom for Marx and Engels is scientific knowledge. It is not fundamentally a question of the will being able to choose this or that human good.

Alves disagrees with the Marxist notion of freedom because of its scientific determinism, which he erroneously equates with the determinism of positivism. However, Alves himself fails to define adequately what he means by freedom over against determinism. He ascribes many properties to the concept of freedom. Some of these are that freedom is a critical power, a creative activity, a dialectical process, a transcendent power of the community, and a quality which makes a person distinctively human. Two of his most complete definitions are the following: first, freedom is the "will to creativity that a community embodies in itself.

It is a communal discipline for the sake of the future."[20] Second, freedom is the "power to transform the will of a community to create the new in history which through a dialectical process transcends and criticizes the given reality."[21] If we combine these definitions and characteristics, freedom for Alves may be defined as the "power of the will of the community to create the new in history which through a dialectical process transcends and criticizes the given reality." The dialectic involves the negation of the negative and the affirmation of a reality qualitatively different from the present reality. What Alves has introduced over against the Marxist notion of freedom is the creative, transcendent element, which is able to go beyond the empirical laws to imagine new forms of society. Without this fundamentally human ability to create utopias, Alves says, man loses his will to shape history and his ability to understand it. Consequently, he becomes an object and a slave. When he ceases to create, man loses his fundamental freedom.[22]

If the freedom of Marxism stresses scientific knowledge, the freedom of messianic humanism highlights the creation of a meaningful destiny. A people becomes politically free when it has the power to create its own future. This is a very restricted use of the word "freedom," just as for different reasons the Marxist usage is. Alves' definition is not concerned primarily with the freedom of exercise--to act or not to act; nor with the freedom of specification--to do this or to do that. Nor is it concerned with one's strength of will to choose the good or to fulfill an obligation. Finally, freedom for Alves is not a human act of loving another, a gift of self-donation, whether the other be a friend or an oppressed people such as the migrant workers.

The essential quality of freedom is to create the new, which Alves thinks is *the* fundamental human act. In defining freedom as the power of the social will to create a utopia, he is assuming either that personal freedom has already been achieved in the individual members of the community, or that personal freedom is realized in the socio-political process of liberation. The latter part of the disjunction seems to be his assumption, judging not only from his definitions of freedom, but also from his many illustrations throughout his writings which are of a political nature. If this inference is correct, then Alves' notion of freedom has some serious limitations. First, it neglects what is generally recognized as an essential dimension of the process of liberation, namely, personal liberation from sin and guilt and the ability to love God and one's neighbor. Moltmann stresses this aspect of liberation, and Gutierrez mentions it briefly. Alves rarely mentions personal liberation, liberation from sin, whether personal or social, or the freedom to love.

Second, there is the tendency on Alves' part to so exalt social man's active, creative power that he fails to consider the existing economic, political, and cultural constraints as well as the limitations of man. Sometimes the manner in which Alves speaks of freedom and imagination conveys a certain romantic arrogance. For example, in defining the imagination as an "ecstatic projecting dynamic of consciousness," he continues: "In imagination the will of man is omnipotent, and as it refuses to take the data as they stand, it proclaims that 'facts are not values.'"[23] This bespeaks a certain romanticism as well as an arrogance that a community, even a nation, can and will create a new system, passing over the real constraints of limited natural resources, the international monetary system, the threat of trade embargoes and closures on loans by the World Bank. Surely Alves must be aware of these constraints in his native Brazil. Nonetheless, he fails to consider them in his writings.

Finally, Alves never explains who the creators are. Are they the workers as well as the educators within the entire community? Not very many people in any community are so imaginative on the high, theoretical level on which Alves is operating. From a few sources one surmises that the imaginative people Alves speaks of are an elitist community of planners and political theoreticians with whom Alves is associated in São Paulo.[24]

The Verification of Imagination in Praxis

The manner in which Alves tries to show the necessity of utopian thought is twofold. First, historically utopian thinking has always preceded social transformation. Here he bases his argument on Buber's *Paths in Utopia* and Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*. Second, the liberation process effectively would be blocked if the imagination were to be arrested in a society. A people's imagination can be so domesticated by those in control that the type of planning that is done for the future becomes functional and technological, but not creative.[25] Bigger tools and more efficient bureaucracies can be, and are, developed, but the quality of life remains the same. How does Alves suggest that his thesis of the imagination and the new future be tested; that is, how can it be demonstrated that the imagination is necessary to bring about a qualitatively new society? The validity or verification of the utopia in history must be judged in the future, he says.[26]

But some difficulties arise when one tries to verify the hypothesis that the imagination is essential for bringing about a qualitatively new society. First, one must wait a sufficiently long time to gather enough evidence before judging whether imagination, as expressed in a concrete vision, is actually realized. Second, one must determine what specific characteristics shall be examined in the new society and in the new person in order to verify whether the vision of messianic humanism is a utopia that is liberating or an ideology that is alienating.

We are not concerned with the question whether the vision of messianic humanism will someday be historically realized. We are interested in examining the values constituting this vision. First, are the values sufficently concrete that they can be implemented, or so abstract that they are too far removed from the socioeconomic-political realities? Second, are these values directed toward a political transformation of the social conditions? The fundamental values of messianic humanism, as we have seen in Chapter III, are human life and freedom. While these values are most fundamental in a liberated society, they are quite broad in scope and, hence, lack concreteness and applicability.

Moreover, the value of freedom is tautological. According to Alves freedom is a power of the social will to create the new in history. And the new is that which makes life more human in the world. But what is human? For Alves the human is the life of freedom. Hence, freedom is defined in terms of itself. What this tautology suggests is that Alves' model of messianic humanism lacks a concrete value or quality by which to judge whether the future society is more human or liberated. That concrete value cannot be freedom because freedom is defined in terms of the very concept that needs to be defined, namely, the power to create. Even assuming that the value of freedom could somehow be verified in the new society, one can still quite legitimately ask the question: Yes, but is the new society a just society? The very fact that this question can be asked indicates a lack of ethical language in Alves' paradigm. Justice, for example, is rarely mentioned.

The second difficulty pertaining to the verification question concerns the almost total absence of discussion about economic and political theory and models of change. If the imagination is part of the historical process which is grounded in the praxis of the past and present and which looks for the realization of its vision in the future, along what general, theoretical lines might the humanization process develop?[27] What, for example, is his perspective on market, mixed, and planned economies? Would he envision a certain form of democratic government that would insure maximum public contestation and governmental participation? He does not mention these or other social realities. As was mentioned above, he is aware of the struggle for power and freedom between the "haves" and the "have nots." Yet he does not envision the new, liberated society resulting from a class struggle. His opposition to the Marxist model is strong and becomes even stronger in his later writings.[28] In the absence of the discussion of the economic and political realities, one is left with the suspicion that there is a large sector of social praxis in which his imaginative theological language is not grounded.

A third difficulty, which is related to the second, concerns the dialectical relationship between creative ideas and political praxis. If the relationship is truly a dialectical one, then not only will the idea negate a certain practice, but the practice will in turn negate the idea. To be more specific, one would like to see how the vision as expressed in messianic humanism is negated by the economic, political, ecclesiastical, and cultural realities in Brazil or in any of the Latin American countries. Alves fails to discuss this moment of the dialectic, either concretely or abstractly even in his most recent writings. His discussion of the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in Latin America includes very general, historical observations about what these institutions have contributed in the past.[29]

Evaluation

In order to judge whether the model of messianic humanism is an opiate, or an ideology, we examined the writings of Rubem Alves in the light of two criteria. Regarding the first criterion, Alves states that the operation of the imagination is grounded in praxis, which includes the memory of the past and the suffering of the present. He persuasively argues on an *abstract* level that the creative imagination is part of the historical liberating process. But in arguing for suffering as the source of imaginative thought, he overlooks another source for creative activity, that of the desire for self-expression and self-discovery.

It is on the *concrete* level where Alves is less convincing regarding the relationship of imagination and praxis. First of all, he fails to mention who the creative people are. His creative community of faith seems to be an elitist group rather than the beginning of a grass-roots movement. Second, he does not discuss the imagination in terms of economic, political, or ecclesiastical models, even in the most general way. Third, his notion of freedom, which is defined in terms of creativity, prescinds from notions of justice and obligation.

Turning to the second criterion, we agree with Alves that an empirical verification of the vision of messianic humanism can be carried out in the future. The question raised is whether the values of the utopia are concrete enough to be verified at a future time. Our assessment is that the values of human life and freedom are too broad to be verified. How can one tell whether the new society in Northern Brazil in the year 2001 has a greater respect for life and freedom of its citizens than at the present time? The absence of the value of justice, which can be implemented in terms of specific legislation, such as equal opportunity in education and labor and fair tax laws, is a serious omission by Alves. We suggest that other more specific values which relate better to political and economic realities, as social justice does, are needed to complement and balance the disproportionate emphasis on freedom and creativity.

The general conclusion is this, that in spite of the valuable insights afforded by the new language of the imagination and the model of messianic humanism, the paradigm is not sufficiently rooted in the historical realities to escape Marx' critique. Alves' failure to give sufficient attention to the ethical questions (questions of justice and obligation) regarding problems of development and revolution further removes the already abstract treatment from the concrete.

When Alves proposes the imagination as the central category in ethics, he is giving it a greater importance than it deserves. Only in a negative sense can the imagination be formative for evaluating social structures or economic policies. However, his challenge to the usual way of doing ethics may be a corrective to a discipline which is too heavily committed to adjudicating specific moral issues at the expense of missing the larger vision and the larger world problems, problems which demand creative solutions. It also reminds the ethicist to examine his own bias when he is evaluating what is ethically at stake in the national and international communities.[30]

Gutierrez, Utopia, and Marx

Relation of Idea to Praxis

The question whether the dimension of utopia is adequately grounded in praxis must be directed to the model called "theology of liberation." Gutierrez defines utopian thinking as the function of the creative social imagination which denounces the old unjust reality and announces something new in its place. Utopian thinking, which surfaces in times of crisis, envisions a new type of person within a qualitatively new society. This notion of utopia with its operations of denunciation and annunciation has close parallels with Alves' notion of utopia. Both notions have the same goals, the same dialectical mechanism, and are considered essential, critical forces in the process of liberation. But as we shall see, there are some differences between the two theologians' use of the construct of utopia. In order to see how utopian thinking is related to praxis, we shall first examine how reflective thinking is related to praxis.

The main proposition expressing the relation between thought (idea) and praxis is best expressed in Gutierrez' definition of theology. "Theology is a critical reflection on historical praxis in the light of faith."[31] Three essential terms in this definition need to be defined and discussed: "critical reflection," "historical praxis," and "light of faith."

Theology is a critical reflection or contemplation upon action within the church and the world. Gutierrez has borrowed this notion of critical reflection on praxis from Maurice Blondel, who has developed a philosophy of critical reflection on praxis.[32] Gutierrez' method tries to discover in the activity of people the presence of the Spirit which directs the action of the Christian community.[33] The reflection is "critical" in at least three senses. First, those reflecting must be open to the new future and to new questions and facts arising from history. Second, the term "critical" implies challenging old ideas and practices, and judging them in the light of the new and in the light of faith. Third, "critical" implies commitment, not neutrality. Those engaged in theology of liberation must be committed to those who are to be liberated. The notion of commitment gives a special flavor to Gutierrez' use of the term "critical." The term ordinarily implies an objective evolution of certain phenomena by disinterested observers who do not have a direct interest in the outcome. A theologian of liberation, according to Gutierrez, ought to be committed to transforming the world. In one sense, theologians do indeed have an interest in the outcome, which hopefully will be a more just and fraternal society. It is at this point that Gutierrez' theology is vulnerable to the critique of being ideological. For in the theologian's commitment to the liberation of the oppressed, which by its very nature is political, there is the danger that his theological-ethical investigation may become an interpretation of the issues from a single perspective, namely, from the one to which he is committed.

Gutierrez is certainly aware of this problem. He tries to maintain objectivity through the faith of the gospel and the moral norms of justice and love. Gutierrez would then argue that simple, detached criticism is never possible. In criticizing the Latin American church's past and present position of neutrality, he implies the same thing about a completely impartial or neutral stance on the part of the theologian.[34] Whether a detached, yet informed, observer can be free of cultural and national bias vis-à-vis

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the social issues in another culture and nation is a difficult question to resolve. But today in the light of anthropologists' studies of cultural relativity and its implications for ethics, one should be less ready to accept the claim that theological viewpoints are neutral.[35] But while neutrality may be an illusion, a certain objectivity is essential if the theological investigation is not to become an ideology.

The second term of the proposition, "historical praxis," becomes the content of the theological reflection. By "historical praxis" Gutierrez means the person's active presence in history.[37] The foundation of the Christian praxis is loving service and commitment to God and one's neighbor. A closer look at the words "historical" and "praxis" will illuminate the differences between Gutierrez and Marx.

Gutierrez is never clear on his precise meaning of history. It is not "remembrance" in the classical Greek sense of *anamnesis*, but more of a "thrust into the future."[38] History is a social product in which a people critically analyzes the present and tries to bring about a new society. Recognizing a tendency in Latin Americans to be preoccupied with the past, in what he calls a "precritical consciousness," Guiterrez looks upon history as being created in conflict and struggle. The conflictual nature of history is a characteristic that Alves does not emphasize. Gutierrez' view of history is similar to the Hegelian-Marxian view which stresses the aspect of man creating history in risk and conflict. But for Gutierrez over against Hegel and Marx, there is an eschatological driving force within a future-oriented history.

Gutierrez' stress on the eschatological dimension--the present injustice confronted by a future possibility--is important in his going beyond Hegel and Marx. And yet his neglect of the importance of the past for future liberation is a weakness in his liberation theology model. Both Alves and Moltmann stress the importance of the past, not because of its content as though that should be imitated, but because the past helps to free oneself and a people from past psychological and social causes that continue to oppress them in the present. The evils of a nation's past do not disappear with time, but must be consciously faced and wrestled with. Gutierrez does not confront the political and cultural roots of oppression in the early history of the Latin Americans.

With respect to the term "praxis," Gutierrez has quite obviously taken the word over from Marx, but there are some differences in the way they use the word. For both

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Gutierrez and Marx, praxis is primarily *social* activity. For Marx, the social activity par excellence is labor, where people necessarily interact and cooperate with one another in order to produce a commodity. In Gutierrez' theology, praxis means primarily pastoral activity, which is service-oriented and committed to transforming sinful social structures. But praxis for Gutierrez also includes the political and economic realities. Marx is not concerned with personal or individual emancipation, but with the social, which he stresses in his seventh thesis on Feuerbach: "Social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice."[39] In contrast, Gutierrez does discuss the importance of individual and internal (psychological) liberation, although he does not sufficiently develop this important aspect of liberation. The main thrust of his theology is to develop the sociopolitical dimensions of love and sin.[40]

Regarding the unity of praxis and idea, Gutierrez affirms Marx' philosophical conviction that the validity of a theory or an idea must be judged on the basis of praxis. Gutierrez writes: "Ideas must be reconsidered too in the light of praxis, which is the proving ground of all theory, and in the light of socio-cultural realities very different from those from which the ideas emerged."[41] Thought and praxis are not necessarily opposing or contradictory realities, but may be complementary aspects of the same reality. Ideas and praxis are indissolubly united. An idea, provided it is not ideological, directs and broadens the significance of praxis; praxis is the concretization and corrective of any false or ideological thought. Liberation theology, which is an idea or theory constructed by critical reflection on historical praxis, must in turn be judged for its authenticity by praxis. In this sense, theology of liberation is more existentialist (related to concrete existence) than essentialist (related to the nature of things). In this model, *orthopraxis* is emphasized more than *orthodoxy*. The relationship of idea to praxis closely parallels that same relation in the theory of Marx, who says: "It is not enough that thought should seek to realize itself; reality must strive toward thought."[42]

Finally, praxis is concerned with the transformation of society. Here again Gutierrez is influenced by Marx, who says in his last thesis on Feuerbach that "Philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways, the point, however is to *change* it." Gutierrez maintains that much of traditional theology is subject to Marx' criticism of Feuerbach. But while agreeing with Marx that the objective is to change the world through praxis, he does not foster the view that theology should be a political program of transformation.[43] Nevertheless, Christians should be committed to the liberation of people and to the ultimate transformation of society. Theology in this sense is a political theology which conscientizes the Christian to the root economic and political causes of injustice and to the possibilities for concrete manifestations of love and commitment.

There are differences between Gutierrez and Marx on the notion of praxis. For Gutierrez it not only includes socioeconomic-political activity, but also the fundamental Christian acts, namely, charity, faith, and hope. By charity he means the giving of oneself to God and to one's neighbors. Faith is basically an act of trust, a going out of oneself, and not simply an assent to a divine truth. Therefore, charity and faith are pastoral praxis. Marx, of course, does not speak of faith or charity as praxis but as religion, which comes into being only because of the alienating praxis of labor.

Historical praxis, which includes pastoral activity just described, also includes alienating praxis--sinful practices such as exploiting social structures and unjust economic and political policies. Gutierrez' writings do not clearly distinguish these two forms of praxis, but they are to be found there nonetheless. Most often he uses the term "praxis" as pastoral practice. Sometimes it refers to unjust sinful activity, such as international policies of foreign trade and finance.[44] In summary, praxis may be salvific, or it may be alienating; but it may not be ethically neutral.

The decisive difference between Gutierrez and Marx emerges when the latter's notion that praxis is ultimately derived from the economic structure is contrasted with the former's belief that the eschatological dimension as well as the concrete practices of faith, hope, and charity play a critical role in revolutionary change. The revelation of the final meaning of history criticizes man's present history, giving him a new perspective on it, and invites him to commit himself to its transformation.[45] While Marx' system does look to a new future and even contains a prediction as to the nature of the new society, it does not recognize any transcendent or eschatological reality toward which history is moving.

The Verification of Utopia in Praxis

In reflecting upon the history of man's liberation in both philosophical and theological thought, Gutierrez makes two assertions which are relevant to the utopia-praxis relation and to the verification question. The first is that the struggle for liberation is one process because history is one. World history (*Geschichte*) is salvation history (*Heilsgeschichte*). There is no division of planes between the sacred and the profane. The second assertion is that the liberation process operates on at least three levels, all of which are interconnected and interdependent. Utopia, which is one of these levels, is essentially related to the dimensions of faith and politics. We have just examined the relation of idea (critical thought) and praxis in Gutierrez' model. The question now is whether utopia, understood both as a dynamic operation of the reason and imagination and as a vision to be realized, can be shown to transform praxis and whether this transformation can be verified in praxis. The problem of verification is the second criterion by which the theology of liberation model may be evaluated in the light of the Marxist critique.

Gutierrez is prepared to defend his notion of utopia against the Marxist critique as indicated by the three characteristics he uses to define it. First, utopia is related to present, historical reality through its prophetic function. Utopia repudiates the dehumanizing, social situation and proposes an alternative through the power of the creative imagination. Second, utopia is verified in praxis in the sense that what the person creates leads to action. Interpreting the world is not sufficient. Third, utopia belongs to the rational order, fulfilling the function of true reason. In this capacity utopia serves as the creative, dynamic, internal element of science. Since Gutierrez has provided us with three criteria by which to judge whether his notion of utopia is grounded in history or simply a figment of the imagination, we shall examine each of the three characteristics carefully in order to see if his claim is valid.

The first characteristic brings out the dialectical element that is also a part of the utopian systems of Alves and Moltmann. The mechanism by which an oppressed people creates a qualitatively new society is utopia where committed people protest (denunciation) and fight for something new (annunciation). The prophetic attitude and activity of denunciation-annunciation exists neither in science nor in faith but in the concrete man of science and faith. To acquire the new attitude toward the world, toward God, and toward one's neighbor demands a conversion which involves a new way of thinking and acting. The personal change is expressed both interiorly and exteriorly.

> We have to break with our mental categories, with the way we relate to others, with our way of identifying with the Lord, with our cultural milieu, with our social class, in other words, with all that can stand in the way of a real profound solidarity with those who suffer, in the first place, from misery and injustice. Only thus, and not through purely interior and spiritual attitudes, will the "new man" arise from the ashes of the "old."[46]

The interior change demands a breaking with the mental molds or categories. This transformation is possible through a deep communion with the Lord and loving commitment to all people, but particularly to the oppressed. One then begins to experience life as gift from another, which is to be returned gratuitously to others. The liberated imagination is expressed exteriorly through concrete commitment to those who suffer. The root image which expresses this solidarity for Gutierrez is brotherhood (*fraternidad*), which is realized through the values of loving service and commitment to justice through political action.[47] The Christian's vision and creativity are sparked by his faith and involvement in the world. Faith and action are also corrective elements to safeguard persons from leaning too heavily in the direction of a dogmatism of faith or a dogmatism of science and political action. An imbalance in either direction is ideology, not utopia.

To modify slightly Gutierrez' proposition, one could say that theology is a critical reflection on historical praxis in the light of faith *and science* (emphasis added).[48] Science would include not only Marxist science of economics, but political science and the behavioral and natural sciences. Faith by itself cannot purify man's historical religion of its ideology. Therefore, Marx is quite right in criticizing religion for its ideological behavior, Gutierrez says, because it avoided the corrective of science which is able to expose some of its blindness to reality. For example, Freudian psychology, in pointing out the existence of the unconscious forces, has helped purify religion of the distorted view that religious people decide and act purely out of spiritual and altruistic motives. Marxist science has made a parallel contribution on the social level.

On a deeper level, faith purifies a person's thinking, guarding against his absolutizing the insights of science. Thus, faith and science can and ought to enter into a fruitful relationship mediated on the utopian level, that is, within the creative imagination of man. Gutierrez insists that the levels of scientific rationality and faith do not *directly* encounter each other, but only *indirectly* through the mediation of utopia. Ché Guevara, for example, incorporated the science of economics and the theory of Marxism within political action which includes a great concern for helping to bring about a new type of person within society. Science and faith helped him to create a vision of what a people might become. Thus, faith and science come together in the concrete person or group of persons who create alternative values to the ones they reject. Such creative activity leads to action.

While Gutierrez' attempt at integrating the contributions of faith and science in order to open new horizons for a new kind of society is an invaluable undertaking, his assertion that the imaginative idea necessarily leads to action is not sufficiently demonstrated. He fails to show, either by means of historical examples (aside from Ché Guevara's life), or by logical argument, that this leads to subversive action. He argues that utopia, which operates in the field of the creative imagination, is a "dynamic and mobilizing force in history."[49] It is neither the force of science, nor the power of faith. It is a human work which is connected to both science and faith. But it is difficult to grasp precisely what this utopia within man is. Leaving that aside for the moment, we move to the second characteristic of utopia.

Utopia is verified in praxis. While utopia does not try to create programs, it does imagine new postulates and goals to be implemented in political action. The test of the authenticity, and therefore the concrete applicability, of utopia is whether the utopia issues into more human living conditions and a new social consciousness.[50] Ideology, in contrast, is tied to the empirical or to the status quo within society. Ideology does not elicit new commitments and raise the awareness of a people to the level where they feel that they are subjects of their own history.

For Gutierrez verification of utopia occurs in the future, but not in a future which is beyond history. How is utopia to be distinguished from ideology? He follows the suggestion of Karl Mannheim. According to Mannheim utopian ideas are those "orientations transcending reality . . . which, when they pass over into conduct, tend to shatter, either partially or wholly, the order of things prevailing at the time." Ideas are ideological which are appropriated for a time "as long as they [are] 'organically' and harmoniously integrated into the worldview characteristic of the period (i.e., [do] not alter revolutionary possibilities)."[51]

Are the values of Gutierrez' model of liberation utopian or ideological? While this judgment can be empirically verified in the future by observing then whether the values are embodied in a new social consciousness and new bonds of brotherhood which are characterized by justice, charity, and liberty, we may make some assessment of these values in reference to praxis. While some of these values are abstract (new social consciousness and brotherhood), others are more concrete (acts of justice and charity). Gutierrez identifies the social injustice within the existing class structure as the fundamental cause of the present alienation in Latin America. Therefore, the gradual transformation of the unjust class structure would be a concrete sign of the new society. Another sign of the approaching utopia of liberation is that the oppressed themselves, living in accordance with the spirituality of the *anawim*, begin to liberate themselves through political action.[52]

The third characteristic of utopia is rationality. Here Gutierrez borrows the ideas of Paul Blanquart, who argues that utopia is the power of reason and the imagination, operating especially in times of crisis, to develop a new theory as a replacement for the present one. This imaginative power enables the scientist to make the jump from the empirical data to a theoretical construct, which is able to explain all the data as well as to account for the new phenomena.[53] In a similar fashion, the social imagination of a community is able to construct a new paradigm that gives meaning, identity, and vision for political action. Gutierrez does not elaborate on the creative process.

But this much can be said: Imagination for Gutierrez seems to be less a spontaneous creation done just for the thrill of expressing itself than a disciplined, rational activity undertaken during duress, somewhat as a scientist responds to a crisis because of repeated anomalies in his experiments. While the process of the imagination for Gutierrez is not discursive reasoning, it seems to lack the element of free association of ideas by an artist or a child at play, and the element of a driving curiosity which moves one to explore the unknown without any purpose other than the thrill of discovery. The imagination seems to be a deliberate, purposeful activity directed toward the liberation of a people from oppression. It has the Marxist quality of an idea which arises out of praxis in order to protect against the old and to fight for the new. This is a special use of the term "imagination," and perhaps its function is closer to the rational power of insight than to the power of fantasy. At the same time, Gutierrez says that it is the power to *pro-ject* into the future, which is characteristic of the imagination.

Evaluation

In trying to answer the question about the adequacy of the model of a theology of liberation in reference to Marx' critique, we proceeded in three steps. The first two steps involved examining the relation of the idea to praxis and the utopian idea to praxis. The third step dealt with the verification of the authenticity of Gutierrez' utopia within history. In step one we saw that Gutierrez interprets the relation of the idea to praxis dialectically. Ideas may be either ideological or utopian. Ideology proposes values that may exist harmoniously with a certain worldview, but which are not in complete accord with reality. Ideology masks and distorts reality and does not offer truly liberating possibilities for society. Praxis stands as a corrective against ideological ideas. Utopian ideas, on the other hand, do reflect the true values of the world process and are revolutionary in the sense that they protest against the values of the conservative ideology. As for the second step, Gutierrez proposes three criteria in order to demonstrate the concrete applicability of utopia. Utopia is related to history because it transforms history, because it is verified in political praxis within history, and because it operates according to the mechanism of scientific discovery. While none of the criteria are developed with much precision, Gutierrez does succeed in making the point that utopian thinking is related to historical praxis.

In the third step dealing with the verification question, Gutierrez presents some fairly distinguishable characteristics by which one may recognize the advent of the qualitatively new society. In addition to the presence of peace, justice, and liberty, the utopia of liberation of the oppressed may be recognized further by fraternal rather than paternalistic bonds between people; justice for the oppressed rather than exploitation; a new type of person who is the subject of his destiny; and a classless society rather than the present system of oppressors and oppressed. In trying to answer the question whether this model of liberation is ideological or not, one must return again to the two criteria. First, are the qualities described by

Gutierrez the results of critical reflection on praxis by the people of Peru and of other Latin American countries? Gutierrez implies that they are. The hope of the new society arises out of praxis of the present and is carried on by the poor and oppressed. But the fact that many of the values that Gutierrez proposes for the utopian future result from his reflection upon traditional sources, namely, scripture and church documents, leaves one with the suspicion that not all the values are derived from praxis. To confirm the assertion that the utopian ideas have arisen out of critical reflection on historical praxis, one would have to examine other sources from Latin America.

While no clear judgment can be made as to whether liberation theology as expressed by Gutierrez is ideology, his criteria for verification seem to be sound. Utopia must be judged in the light of both political praxis and faith. The values of his utopian society are fairly concrete and are signs that can be recognized in a future society.

One final comment concerns the nature of utopia. Gutierrez seems anxious to show how Christians and Marxists both operate on the level of utopia. In this way both can contribute toward the process of liberation of the oppressed even while adhering to their own fundamental values which are contradictory. If utopian thinking is in fact a human, mobilizing force behind each one's commitment, and if utopia is essentially related to science and political practice, then it is not illusion or an opiate.

But is utopia a distinct, yet interdependent dimension of the liberation process, which mediates between political action and faith? Or is it an artificial construct? Utopia does seem to circumvent the problem involved in directly applying faith to politics. But more relevant to the discussion at hand, utopia seems to be a way of solving the practical pastoral problem of reconciling the common commitment of Marxists and Christians who hold irreconcilable views on the doctrinal level. Atheistic Marxists seem to be committed as much as Christians to the noble task of liberating the exploited peoples of Latin America. Utopia seems to be a way of showing that there is a driving force within both the Marxists and the Christians that is neither due to Marxian science nor to Christian faith.[54] If this is true, then Gutierrez must explain the relevance of faith for the Christian and the rejection of faith by the Marxist.

A possible explanation might lie in the direction of interpreting Gutierrez' notion of utopia as a kind of natural law. Utopia, according to Gutierrez, is a power of reason, as well as of imagination. It operates in times of crisis, during periods when ethical choices must be made. On the one hand, utopia is the mobilizing and guiding power of science and political action; on the other hand, it is a humanizing power which reveals God. In carrying out both functions, it participates on the cultural-political level and on the level of faith and revelation. The traditional concept of natural law performs many of these same functions. Natural law is a person's right reason, which participates in the divine law, and which guides him in moments of decision and prompts him to commit himself in trust and love to others. If we are correct in interpreting Gutierrez' notion of utopia as a kind of natural law, then it would help clarify the driving force found in both Marxists and Christians, which is illumined by grace.

Moltmann: Imagination and Marx

Relation of Promise and Images of Hope to Historical Praxis

Moltmann defines the imagination as an anticipatory power of the Crhistian who, in the presence of alienating circumstances, responds with hope by projecting visions of a desirable future. Like Alves' and Gutierrez' notions of imagination and utopia, Moltmann's images of hope, founded on promise, criticize the present evil in anticipation of the new reality (*novum*). But in contrast to messianic humanism and theology of liberation, Moltmann's theology of hope model interprets the origin of the image of hope as emerging, not from revelation in the *present historical* reality, but from a *future transcendent* promise of God.

In approaching the historical nature of the image of hope as the concrete human expression of divine promise, we are following the same two criteria of praxis and verification in order to evaluate the theology of hope model in the light of the Marxist critique. In trying to select a proposition that best expresses the relation between image (theory) and historical praxis, we find that Moltmann's definition of theology is the most suitable. The following definition is a synthetic quotation, from two of his main writings: Theology as Christian eschatology is a language which understands history as the reality instituted by promise, which is constituted by the cross and resurrection of Christ; the new criterion of theology and of faith is to be found in praxis.[55] There are three basic parts to this proposition which will be clarified. First, history is instituted by promise; second, promise is constituted by the cross and resurrection of Christ; and third, theology (faith) is verified in praxis.

Promise is a declaration of God which announces the coming of a new reality which does not exist. It is God's revelation which cuts into reality, dividing the old events from the new events which must be expected and hoped for. Promise (*promissio*) leads to the mission (*missio*) of all Christians who, in obedience to the promise, struggle for true life for all of mankind.[56] Moltmann's interpretation of divine revelation is very much like Barth's, but with an important difference. The similarities are these: first, the Word of promise which breaks in on man's history contradicts the given in the world; second, by breaking in, the Word creates history. Thus, history is really a predicate of God's Word and not conversely.[57] The difference between Moltmann and Barth is that for the latter the future of Christ is simply an "unveiling" of what has already taken place in Jesus once and for all; for Moltmann, the category of the new is not merely an unveiling, but a revealing of something which has not yet happened.[58] One immediately sees the fundamental difference between Moltmann's interpretation of history and that of Karl Marx. For Moltmann God's promise, breaking in on man's world, creates history. But for Marx, history is created according to the dynamic productive forces operating within history.

The second part of the proposition states that the promise is constituted by the cross and resurrection of Christ. This event is the basis for man's hope and for what is new in history. Paradoxically, the resurrection, which is the history-making event par excellence, is an event without parallel or analogy in the history of man.

> . . . the act of raising Jesus is not a historically observable and ascertainable event. We would already have to live in the world of the resurrection and no longer in history dominated by death, if the resurrection should have become for us an observable and measurable event.[59]

Hence, the resurrection faith cannot be verified *historically*. But it can be verified *eschatologically*, which means that while it is not visible "as yet," it can be anticipated in hope (*prolepsis*). The hope of the Christian is grounded not only in the resurrection faith, but in the total person of Jesus, symbolized by the cross. The cross, which is inseparable from the resurrection, is the real mediation of hope for all mankind. The resurrection is indirectly the foundation of Christian hope.[60]

A hermeneutical problem arises regarding the historicity of the resurrection. How can a future event be anticipated which is utterly unique? One of the essential concepts of historical method proposed by Ernst Troeltsch, and one that is generally accepted by historians, is the use of analogy. According to this concept, we judge the historicity of a past event by illustrating a core of similarity between what we see now which is like what happened then.[61] But if the resurrection of Jesus and the future resurrection are historical events without any analogy in the present, then one cannot establish its historicity on the basis, say, of a religious conversion experience. John Macquarrie, along with Alves and Gutierrez, is unsatisfied with the futuricity of the resurrection event as Moltmann develops it. Macquarrie criticizes Moltmann for making the event inaccessible to man's experience.

> Past and future cannot be used to verify each other without reference to the present, especially when we remember the universal tendency to idealize both past and future. We may recall that Alice in Wonderland inquired if she might have some jam. She was told that there was jam yesterday and there will be jam tomorrow, but there is no jam today. And unfortunately it always is today.[62]

Motlmann's response is that, while there are no analogies of the resurrection event in the present, there are analogies of the power of the Spirit of Jesus, who justifies the godless, gives faith in the midst of uncertainty, and the experience of love in the face of death.[63] Moreover, the event of the crucified God, which has analogous events in the suffering and death of the poor, humiliated, and forsaken, is for Moltmann the *indirect* verification of the resurrection event in praxis. Whenever a person stands up in the face of oppression, abandonment, or death, his faith is in a real sense an anticipation of the kind of transformation that will take place in his future resurrection. In other words, we view the future glory in the present only by viewing the crucified Christ; and we discern the resurrection of the crucified one in the negation of the negative.[64]

The third part of the proposition, the relationship of theology and faith to praxis, continues to expand the historicity-of-faith question in relation to Marxist theory. In moving to this third part, we make a transition from Moltmann's theological ethics to his political ethics. Moltmann, like Barth, insists that theology and ethics are inseparable. The one implies the other. Moltmann's theology may be viewed as a general ethical theory which always implies a political theology, or a special ethics. From the general theory of eschatological promises interpreted from biblical and Christian traditional sources, Moltmann's political theology explains how the promises are to be accepted and lived. This acceptance demands the transformation of the alienating conditions of human society. For example, in his latest systematic work, *Der gekreuzigte Gott*, he develops his theodicy, christology, and doctrine of the trinity in the first six chapters; then he shows the implications of this theology for the psychological and political liberation of man in the final two chapters.

But unlike Barth whose *Dogmatics* for the most part ignored Marx' writings, Moltmann takes seriously Marx' critique of religion and the latter's idea of integrating theory with praxis. This principle of integration becomes a crucial element in Moltmann's new political hermeneutic. Marx' critique of religion provides Moltmann with a new insight into the way in which Christian doctrine should be related to a believer's lived faith.

Moltmann sees three aspects to Marx' critique of religion. Religion for Marx includes the expression of real misery, a protest against the misery, and the opiate factor, taken as mere conception or fantasy without any relation to praxis.[65] Moltmann accepts Marx' description of religion as the source of protest against misery, but disagrees that religion necessarily remains only on the conceptual level and hence, always opiate. The hope of religion is not a hope for the beyond, but a hope for the future which affects the present. The social revolution of unjust conditions, which corresponds to the suffering of Christ, "is the immanent reverse side of the transcendent hope."[66]

Moltmann's new political hermeneutic of the gospel has a parallel with Marx' principle of the coordination of theory and praxis. It takes to heart Marx' critique of religion and his eleventh thesis on Feuerbach: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it." Moltmann's hermeneutic, therefore, includes not only interpreting the faith in the light of the past and present history; it is performative, involving the criterion of praxis. Theology is a language about faith which is directed toward transforming the world. Theology is also intentional inasmuch as it expresses the new meaning both by the proclamation of liberation for the humiliated and abused and by preparing the way for it by outlining the means and methods of practical liberation.[67] The method of dialectic has its immanent side of negating the negative through the transformation of unjust and unfree conditions of society. This involves genuine solidarity on the part of the Christian (and theologian) with the suffering and struggle of the oppressed. On this side of liberation, Christians and Marxists should work together. On the transcendent side, the cross of Christ becomes the basic criterion for distinguishing true freedom from idolatry of leaders and institutions.

Images of Action and the Liberation of the Oppressed

For Moltmann the beginning of freedom and the process of liberation is faith. In fact, faith *is* a person's freedom.[68] Faith is an insight into the experience of one's resurrection of freedom which is a participation in Christ's freedom. This insight liberates a person in two ways: first, it frees him *from* the bondage of anxiety and selfishness; second, it frees him *to* hope through creative action. Thus, faith which leads to freedom is expressed in practice both negatively and positively. "Through criticism and protest, on the one hand, and creative imagination and action on the other, we can avail ourselves of freedom for the future."[69] On the negative side, freedom allows one to stand up against apathy and the death instinct.

> It [freedom] opposes the deafening death of bombs and the silent, slinking death of souls. It is prepared to bear the suffering which goes with the risk of opposition, for it refuses to deny its identify and thereby bury its hopes.[70]

On the positive side of freedom, a person participates in new creative life by improving the way things are. Freedom as a passion for new possibilities is the productive imagination process. "Personally I believe that we do not utilize the full range of possibities available to us either for ourselves or for our fellowmen because we do not have the courage to engage in fantasy."[71]

From what Moltmann has said about faith, freedom, and imagination, it would seem to follow that the freedom to create is itself an act of faith and therefore a salvific act. We wonder whether the creative activity of a non-believer, in Moltmann's system, could be the event which is at the same time an act of faith in the exploited people with whom he identifies. Such an act of commitment would seem to transcend one's self-interest, desire for success, and apathy. Moltmann's notion of the transcendent power of the imagination suggests this possibility. However, Moltmann seems to rule out the possibility of faith coming through the very activity itself. The proclamation of the bible within the church, the dialogue of the congregation on the Word, and commitment to Jesus Christ is the context from which faith arises. This is presupposed in his political theology.

> In turning to the concrete goals for which Christian hope can be activated in everyday life, we are presupposing the ministry of the proclamation of the

> Christian gospel. We cannot substitute for this some kind of anonymous cohumanity.[72]

This would seem to rule out the existence of faith within the Marxist revolutionary who works alongside the Christian in liberating and imaginative activity. While Moltmann acknowledges these points of contact between Marxists and Christians, there remains an irreconcilable difference between them, namely, that of faith.

While Marxists hold that man's alienation from himself, his work and from his fellows is due to a system of exploitation in labor, Moltmann maintains that man's basic anxiety--the compulsion to justify oneself through activity --is the fundamental obstacle to liberation. Although Moltmann agrees with Marx' analysis of capitalist society and with his desire to eliminate the oppressive system, the activity of changing society is not the justification of, nor the fundamental liberation of the social changer. To maintain this would be a materialistic illusion. It is the opposite extreme of the idealistic illusion which Marx fought against. Both illusions are to be rejected in favor of a faith which expresses itself in concrete political action.

The basis of the materialistic illusion is the Aristotelian principle that man is what he produces or does.

If a person acts virtuously, he becomes virtuous; if wickedly, he becomes inhuman. But, objects Moltmann, whatever a person does is subject to the law, and the law demands justice of him. The unjust man cannot produce justice precisely because he is unjust. "There is no way to get from doing to being." When Marx criticizes capitalistic society for its exploitation and desire to possess more and more capital, he is demonstrating Luther's principle that the "exploiting society of achievement is a form of institutionalized justification by works."[73]

The early Marx envisioned within the classless society a gradual diminution of work and an increased amount of meaningful activity. Through the socialization of the means of production, the division of labor, with its piecemeal and repetitive type of work, ceases and is replaced by a more enriching type of activities much like artistic creativity. In this sense, work becomes a kind of play. But the older Marx of *Capital* interprets the socialization of the economy in quantitative terms of a shorter working week and more time for leisure. Consequently, labor does not become more humanized or qualitatively different. Man remains a producer. Hence, Marx, who uses the Aristotelian principle in order to criticize capitalism, in the final analysis remains tied to the same doctrine, "Man is what he produces." According to Moltmann, Marx fails to break the "compulsion of works." Marxism differs from capitalism only in the sense that there is a change from labor for the sake of the oppressor to labor for one's own sake, the change is from extrinsic determination to self-determination. But the compulsion to action is common to both philosophies.[74]

In summary, Moltmann's liberation theology is a clear and consistent application of Reformation theology, with its Lutheran principle of justification by faith alone, to the sociopolitical realm in the light of Marxist thought. Faith leads to praxis. Praxis following from faith becomes "free works" in the sense that it is not done out of a necessity to justify oneself. While we agree with the necessity of faith for liberation that Moltmann stresses, we find his insistence on the prior condition of *explicit* faith a very conservative theological position. For it seems likely that there are many outside the church who do not hear the Word proclaimed and who do not confess the Lordship of Jesus in word, but who freely, and not out of compulsion, work and play and dance for the liberation of the poor.

Images of Action and Verification in Praxis

In this section we present some of the images of action which constitute Moltmann's vision of the new society, and try to see what his criteria for verification are. The images of action, created by the productive imagination, operate on two planes. On the plane of obedience to God's promise, the Christian tries to experience the crucified Christ in areas of life where people are in bondage. Imagination on this plane is within the realm of ethics. Its vision arises through a negation of the negative. Man's obedient response to anticipate the new by negating the old corresponds to God's sovereignty. On the plane of spontaneous and purposeless activity, the productive imagination creates images in celebration of the joy of life itself. Spontaneous games, dance, song, humor, and other creative activities, which in themselves are not goal-oriented, serve to balance the new obedience by not allowing it to deteriorate into legalism.[75] The expression of the joy of existence corresponds to God's glory and to the beautiful in God. This is the realm of aesthetics.

In order to see more clearly how the transcendent relates to praxis, it will be helpful to examine some of these images of action in both realms. In the realm of ethics, the Christian creates images that lead to action out of obedience to the crucified God, who is present to and identified with the suffering. Moltmann isolates areas of life where people are in bondage. He calls these "vicious circles of death" (*Teufelskrise des Todes*) because they possess a devilish power and are interlocked like links in a chain. There are five of these circles: (1) poverty and exploitation, (2) violence, (3) racial and cultural alienation, (4) the destruction of nature through industrial progress, and (5) meaninglessness and godforsakenness.[76]

In looking for the concrete presence of God in these areas of modern society, Moltmann engages in a critical negation of the evils in order to find concrete ways that the vicious circles can be broken. The symbols of liberation are the negation of the vicious circles. They are signs of God's presence where the universal is grounded in the concrete and the eschatological in the everyday occurrence. The symbols are (1) socialism, (2) democracy, (3) emancipation, (4) peace with nature, and (5) the courage to be. These are not definitive, but invitations to rethink, to discover and work out new modes of action.

Nor do they represent concrete programs of action. The symbols or images are explained in terms of a very general analysis of the poverty of the world, domination in politics, and cultural alienation among the nations. He urges that nations practice social justice by means of a more equitable distribution of property. Of the political dimension he writes, "The goal of the democratic movement . . . is the making possible the realization of human dignity through liberation from political oppression and servitude."[77] But what does practicing social justice and showing concern for the economically weak nations mean? Moltmann does not elaborate. His symbol of socialism is not a call for a classless society, as we find in Gutierrez' theology. Regarding the symbol of democracy, he urges greater participation of all citizens, the breakdown of elitist and dictatorial governments, and the buildup of political human rights.

Moltmann fails to nuance the general discussion of these dimensions with any empirical data or insight into the complexities of economics, politics, and social systems. He is more concrete than Alves, but less so than Gutierrez in this respect. His system is helpful, however, in laying out the many different dimensions, including a few that Gutierrez fails to mention, namely, liberation from ecological destruction and racial-cultural alienation. His model is also helpful in emphasizing the important point that the vicious circles are tied into one system. To think that one can liberate a people by breaking down one of these circles is naive.

These images of liberation have built into them a priority of values which give a still deeper view into Moltmann's utopian society. On the economic and political levels of liberation, Moltmann stresses social justice through a redistribution of property, a more equitable tax system, and greater citizen participation in decisions of government. On the cultural dimension, he stresses a balance between identity and integration, supported by trust and mutual recognition. The values of social justice, identity, and love, characterize the new society. In discussing the symbols of liberation in his most recent writings, he seems to be appealing to the good will of leaders of state and of the church to work toward greater social justice.[78] His treatment implies a genuine hope of gradual change by working through the system rather than through a class struggle. This is in contrast to his earlier writings on revolution where he perceives the goal of identifying with the oppressed leading to the abolition of the whole master-slave relationship.[79]

In his earlier writings on revolution, he treats the problem of violence within the context of the values of love and justice. Love on the social level becomes an unconditional resolve toward justice, freedom, and the welfare of others.[80] Because of a person's love for others who are suffering, his own suffering becomes intolerable. He therefore joins the revolution, risking even his personal innocence in resorting to violence. Violence is to be used as a last resort and in proportion to the human goal of liberation. In this context, one's responsibility to others takes priority over one's personal innocence. While one cannot justify the violence, one can responsibly answer for it.

But because revolutions have a tendency toward violence and because revolutionary leaders are not immune to the anxiety and arrogance of power, there is great need for imagination, which artfully tries to combine what is objectively possible with what can realistically be accomplished. Here is where aesthetics complements and balances ethics. Moltmann stresses the need for spontaneous activity which transcends the revolutionary movement itself. Thus, by means of play, dance, song, and humor, those engaged in social transformation may receive a more human perspective.

The churches can be a testing ground for this kind of liberating, playful activity. Noting the ever-increasing amount of leisure among working people, Moltmann suggests that churches, rather than filling up their weekday schedule with theological workshops and charitable and social activities, ought to work also in the area of leisure, relaxation, entertainment and culture--activities which are purpose-free.[81] Moltmann's new image of the church's activity has some interesting aspects. First of all, such experiments, unlike educational and socioethical activities, become engaged in the possibilities of freedom. It is not an escape-valve mechanism, but an opportunity for spontaneity, an opportunity for encouraging the productive imagination, and a preparation for social change "by introducing people to an unauthoritarian brotherhood."[82] It is difficult to give examples because examples tend to inhibit spontaneity. One cannot say how creative activity can be *done*, but one can only provide the conditions to release or set it free.

> I have actually seen the signs of the liberated church: at Ascension Church in East Harlem, at the "liberated church" in San Francisco, in black congregations in Kenya, in German congregations abroad and Christian groups within the German Church which definitely did not consist solely of young people. A person has to try this out for himself to experience it.[83]

Moltmann's two realms of ethics and aesthetics, which are developments from his fundamental theology, present two sets of values by which *theory* (believing hope in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ) may be verified in *praxis* (liberation of people on all dimensions). In the realm of ethics, people must undergo a *metanoia*, or a personal conversion. In obedient response to God's eschatological promise, the liberated people of hope work for social justice, identity, integration, peace with nature, and openness. For those personally liberated, these are "free works," which are not only obedient responses to God's new law, but signs of faith and hope. As such they give hope to others that the crucified God is present among the suffering and the oppressed. In concretely giving hope to others, people verify or make credible God's eschatological promises. In the realm of aesthetics, the imagination likewise functions dialectically by negating all forms of coercion by means of its spontaneous celebration of the newness of freedom, life, and beauty through forms of play and humor. Its *goal* is not to liberate, but in its very *activity*, it is liberating. The imagination does not try to create new forms of expression for the liberation movement, but the spontaneous and free activity does create new ideas and expressions of what it means to be free. The celebration of freedom, life, and beauty through spontaneous activity provides another criterion for verifying the presence of future promise in history.

Evaluation

In evaluating Moltmann's theology of hope in the light of the Marxist critique of religion, we again focus on the integration principle of theory and praxis. For Moltmann history is a predicate of God's Word, which contradicts Marx' interpretation of history. God's Word, revealed in the form of promise, is an eschatological reality. The history-creating event par excellence is the resurrection event, which is indirectly verifiable through the hopeful anticipation of people who await the final resurrection. But the hope in the future resurrection is not simply a hope in the "beyond." As such it would be the kind of opiate that Marx successfully attacked. The believing hope of the Christian is demonstrated in the first place through a personal liberation. The verification, or the credibility, of that personal liberation occurs in praxis. We saw that for Moltmann, the praxis of the Christian takes place within two realms which serve to balance and complement each other. In the realm of ethics, the person of hope, in obedient response to the crucified, anticipates the fulfillment of the promise by working toward the transformation of the unjust and alienating conditions of society. His anticipation of the New Creation helps him to imagine new and fresh possibilities for changing society. The imagination, as the power to anticipate the new, operates dialectically for Moltmann. The positive new vision is created in negative knowledge. Thus, by criticizing and negating the present misery, one imagines what the obverse side of man's negative existence would be. In the realm of aesthetics, the person of hope anticipates the promise of the resurrection through spontaneous and free activity. Its only "purpose" is the celebration and demonstration of the joy of existence. As such it anticipates the glory of the resurrection. In this kind of activity, the imagination creates new images for living freely. However, the activity itself is a verification of the promise. As praxis it verifies faith.

Moltmann's theology of hope model is a very good synthesis of faith and action. Carefully guarding against the pitfall of a supernaturalism by showing the political-ethical implications of faith and the pitfall of a materialism by upholding the distinction between the transcendent and the immanent, the eschatological and the historical, he demonstrates how faith can and ought to be verified in history. Coming to grips with Marx' critique of religion, he delineates the common points of contact between Marxists and Christians. The irreconcilable difference between Marxism and Christianity, that of faith, is clearly developed in terms of the justification-by-faith-alone principle on the socioeconomic-political level. Marxism, like capitalism, operates on the philosophical conviction that man becomes what he does or produces. This is a perceptive observation. At the same time, one would like to see in Moltmann's writings a model of society that would be free from this philosophy. Moltmann's imaginative symbols of liberation is a good start, but it is more of an exercise of laying out the parameters rather than constructing a model of society.

As consistent and as imaginative as Moltmann's political theology is, it is not completely liberated from a rigid dualism. This dualism is in evidence at two points. First, God's future promise as an eschatological reality breaks into the present at the boundary situation, that is, at points where mankind suffers and feels abandoned. Two brief observations can be made. One would like to see God's presence and communication in all sectors of human existence and not only at boundary situations of suffering. Our view is that God is present in history, not simply by anticipation. Moltmann's insistence that the cross is where one meets God does not take seriously one's rebirth in baptism, where one not only dies, but is reborn in Christ. The gift of rebirth, or of resurrection, is *somewhat* realized in the present. As such it too should be a point of contact between man and God. One should experience God in the joy of love, of celebration, and of discovery. Moltmann tries to bring this out in his theology of play. But for him celebration is not the experience of resurrection through faith, but the anticipation of resurrection, a reality completely different from what we experience.

The second place where the dualism appears is in his distinction between ethics and aesthetics. The values for these two realms are obedience and glory or pleasure, respectively. Moltmann seems to cast the obedient praxis of the Christian revolutionary and the activity of the churches in an inferior light relative to spontaneous activity. A person's or a church's labor becomes associated with "works"--necessary but unfree activity.

> The steps leading from a reproduction of the working world during leisure to the production of new conditions in leisure are difficult but must be attempted if we are to live our freedom actually. This is why Chris-

> tian congregations should not use their allotted portion of the time free of labor and domination entirely for educational and socioethical activities. These activities may be necessary but they are not yet free.[84]

But why should labor, such as educational and socioethical activities, necessarily be lacking the quality of freedom, if we presuppose a *metanoia* in the members of the congregation? To identify simply work or labor with "works" is to suggest that any type of activity that is directed toward a goal is less human because it is purposeful activity. It seems strange that Moltmann, who accepts Bonhoeffer's notion of "being there for others" as essential for the liberation of oppressed man, would fail to see labor in the factory, in the classroom, and in picketing "Safeway" as free activity inasmuch as it is "being there for the sake of" family, the ignorant, and the farmworkers. Moltmann's identification of work with reproductive imagination is his basis for separating the realm of necessity from the realm of freedom. Although he says that both are needed in order to avoid the two pitfalls of materialism and spiritualism in the liberation process, the first is clearly subordinate to the second. Play, which more closely resembles the gratuitous nature of faith, is better than work, which has the tendency to be "works," or ncessary and achievement-oriented activity.

Notes

[1] Karl Marx, *Die Frühschriften*, ed. by Siegfried Landshut (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1953), p. 582.

[2] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. and with an Introduction by C. J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970), p. 47.

[3] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, in *Marx & Engels Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. by Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1959), p. 44; see also Karl Marx, "Preface to the Second Edition" of *Capital*, in *Basic Writings*, p. 145.

[4] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, in *Basic Writings*, pp. 37-39.

[5] Friedrich Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, in *Basic Writings*, p. 73.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

[7] Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, p. 37.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[9] Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 42.

[10] Friedrich Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, in *Basic Writings*, p. 279.

[11] Rubem A. Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope* (New York: Corpus Publications, 1969), pp. 87-88, 159-168, *passim*.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

[13] Rubem A. Alves, "God's People and Man's Liberation," *Communio Viatorum*, XIV (Summer-Fall 1971), 111.

[14] Rubem A. Alves, "Theology and the Liberation of Man," *In Search of a Theology of Development*, a Sodepax Report (Geneva, Switzerland: The Ecumenical Centre, 1969), p. 82.

[15] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 161.

[16] Rubem A. Alves, "Protestantism in Latin America: Its Ideological Function and Utopian Possibilities," *The Ecumenical Review*, XXII (January 1970), 2-3.

[17] Rubem A. Alves, "Christian Realism: Ideology of the Establishment," *Christianity and Crisis*, XXXIII (September 17, 1973), 174.

[18] Raya Donayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1972).

[19] Engels, *Dühring's Revolution*, in *Basic Writings*, p. 279.

[20] Rubem A. Alves, *Tomorrow's Child* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 202.

[21] Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 137.

[22] Rubem A. Alves, "Some Thoughts on a Program for Ethics," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, XXVI (Winter 1971), 161.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

[24] James F. Conway, *Marx and Jesus: Liberation Theology in Latin America* (New York: Carlton Press, 1973), p. 80; see also Rubem A. Alves, "A Theology of Human Hope," lecture presented and taperecorded at the Council on Religion and International Affairs (New York: Council on Religion and International Affairs, 1971).

[25] Alves, *Tomorrow's Child*, pp. 34-38.

[26] Alves, "Program for Ethics," pp. 165-166; Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope*, p. 131.

[27] Alves, "A Theology for Human Hope."

In the discussion period following this lecture, Alves was asked about a new political model that is needed for today's society. Alves replied that no one seems to have a satisfactory model.

[28] Rubem A. Alves, "Marxism as the Guarantee of faith," *Worldview*, XVI (March 1973), 13-17.

[29] Rubem A. Alves, "Is There Any Future for Protestantism in Latin America?" *The Lutheran Quarterly*, XXII (February 1970), 49-49; Alves, "God's People and Man's Liberation," pp. 107-115.

[30] Stanley Hauerwas, "Politics, Vision, and the Common Good," *Cross Currents*, XX (Fall 1970), 400-401.

[31] Gustavo Gutierrez, *Teologia de la liberación* (Lima, Peru: CEP, 1971), p. 31.

[32] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, trans. and ed. by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1973), p. 9.

[33] Gustavo Gutierrez, "The Meaning of Development," *In Search of a Theology of Development*, a Sodepax Report (Geneva, Switzerland: The Ecumenical Centre, 1969), p. 120.

[34] Guiterrez, as quoted by Conway in *Marx and Jesus*, pp. 139-140.

[35] H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), pp. 29-39.

[36] Ewert H. Cousins, ed., *Hope and the Future of Man* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), pp. x-xi.

[37] Gutierrez, *A Theology or Liberation*, p. 7.

[38] *Ibid.*, p, 213,

[39] Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in *Basic Writings*, p. 245.

[40] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 30-31.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

[42] Marx, "The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, trans. and ed. by T. B. Bottomore, with a Foreword by Erich Fromm (New York:

McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 54.

[43] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 9 and 18 (footnote 31).

[44] Gutierrez, "The Meaning of Development," p. 167; see also Gustavo Gutierrez, "Marxismo & Cristianismo," *Cristianos Latinoamericanos y Socialismo*, trans. by T. Matt Garr (Bogotá: Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo e Integración de América Latina, 1971), p. 24.

[45] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 165.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 205.

[47] *Ibid.*, pp. 262-279.

[48] Gutierrez, "Marxismo y Cristianismo," pp. 26-30.

[49] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 233.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

[51] Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1936), pp. 173-174.

[52] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 203-208.

[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 234-235.

[54] Gutierrez, "Marxismo y Cristianismo," pp. 25-33.

[55] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, trans. by James W. Leitch (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 224-225; Jürgen Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, trans. by M. Douglas Meeks (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), p. 138.

[56] Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 225.

[57] M. Douglas Meeks, *Origins of the Theology of Hope*, with a Foreword by Jürgen Moltmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), p. 57.

[58] Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 229.

[60] *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

[61] Ernst Troeltsch, *Christian Thought: Its History and Application*, ed. and trans. by Baron F. von Hügel (London: University of London Press, 1923), pp. 69-66, *passim*.

[62] John Macquarrie, "Eschatology and Time," *The Future of Hope*, ed. by Frederick Herzog (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970), p. 122.

[63] Jürgen Moltmann, "Towards the Next Step in the Dialogue," *The Future of Hope*, ed. by Frederick Herzog (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970), p. 163.

[64] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 34.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

[68] Moltmann, "Freedom in the Light of Hope," *The Japan Christian Quarterly*, XXXIX (Summer 1973), 152.

[69] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 79.

[70] Moltmann, "Freedom in the Light of Hope," p. 154.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

[72] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 122; see also p. 102.

[73] Moltmann, *Theology of Play* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 51.

[74] *Ibid.*

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[76] Jürgen Moltmann, *Der gekreuzigte Gott* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1972), pp. 306-308.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 309.

[78] *Ibid.*, pp. 306-308.

[79] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, p. 143.

[80] Jürgen Moltmann, *Umkehr zur Zukunft* (Munich: Siebenstern Taschenbuch Verlag, 1970), pp. 51, 53.

[81] Moltmann, *Theology of Play*, p. 68.

[82] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

[83] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Summary of Goal and Procedure

The goal of this research has been to determine how adequately three contemporary theological languages of liberation respond to Marx' critique of religion as the opiate of the people. Perhaps a better way of expressing the goal is in the form of a question: Are any or all of these three models ideological? There are, of course, many forms of ideology. Marx interprets ideology to mean any more or less conscious disguise of the true situation by those in control. According to Marx, religion is an ideology because it justifies the position of the dominant class and consoles the oppressed in its misery.

This question arose through an investigation of some contemporary political theologies dealing with the theme of revolution and liberation. Many of these political theologies, it was discovered, have the following common characteristics: first, they develop the theme of liberation within an eschatological framework; second, they stress the importance of man's creative imagination in the liberating process; third, they address the criticism that Marx leveled against nineteenth-century European theology. Clearly influenced by Marx' humanistic philosophy, these political theologies maintain that the theory of religion must be integrated with praxis, and that Christian praxis involves the transformation of the sociopolitical-economic structures of society. From among the five political theologies investigated in the preliminary research, three were selected for study in this dissertation: the messianic humanism of Rubem Alves, the theology of liberation of Gustavo Gutierrez, and the theology of hope of Jürgen Moltmann.

The method used in this research has been a comparative historical analysis of each theologian's system in the light of Marx' critique. The critical element in determining the adequacy of each response is that of praxis. While none of the theologians under study accept the epistemological interpretation of Marx and Engels regarding the relation of theory to praxis, all recognize and incorporate into their system the criterion of praxis. This criterion, as we define it, means, in the first place, that theory and all forms of mental activity are grounded in historical praxis, although not completely conditioned by it; in the second place, that theory in the form of religious belief must lead to the transformation of the alienating and sinful conditions and structures of society. Otherwise, theology becomes an opiate or an ideology that favors the position of the ruling class over against the oppressed classes. We refer to this ideology as the illusion of *spiritualism*. In its extreme form spiritualism views the transcendent as something elusive and unutterable and at the same time avoids the data of immediate experience and the empirical findings of science.[1] A less extreme form of the same spiritualist tendency is the type of theology which is constructed from Christian doctrine and which is not informed by principles derived from ordinary experience. Such theology remains on a very high level of abstraction. It becomes very difficult to bridge the gap between the dogmatic principles and the ethical principles operating within the sociopolitical-economic region. The values and moral activity of people are relatively unaffected by such theology. One consequence is that the abstract theological doctrine may become an opiate for those who are the victims of institutionalized injustices.

Theology can become entrapped in another pitfall, the ideology of *materialism*. This form of ideology universalizes and makes absolute some specific, limited area of man's total sensible experience, which then becomes the norm for all reality. There are many forms of this ideology, such as nationalism and technocracy. Marx, who singles out for criticism the spiritual form of ideology, is himself guilty of a materialistic form which makes absolute certain laws of economics. In addition to fully developed ideological theories, such as Marx' historical materialism, there may also arise unreflexive attitudes or undeveloped theories expressed in a concrete theological program, which, consciously or not, may tend to identify itself with the Kingdom of God. The transcendent criterion of the Christian faith guards against the ideology of materialism. This criterion cautions the Christian against unconditionally identifying with any one cause, movement, or political system.

These two criteria of praxis and of faith emerged from our examination of both Marx' critique of religion, and of the theological responses to the critique by Barth, Tillich, and Niebuhr. It is our contention that a theological model which integrates theological doctrine with historical praxis offers the most satisfactory response to Marx' critique of religion.

In assessing the theological responses of Barth, Tillich, and Niebuhr, we conclude that none of these models provides a satisfactory answer to the critique of Marx. While each theological system is helpful in recognizing the merits and deficiencies in the critique, these theologies lack a satisfactory integration between their christological or ontological doctrine and a political theory of praxis. Karl Barth's response, which fails to take seriously Marx' thought, stresses the importance of God's action over against man's action. Liberation for Barth results from man's capacity to recognize and praise the divine command by concrete action. However, his theology is not helpful in interpreting God's Word in complex sociopolitical situations. In brief, Barth's theology does not develop the relation of the principles of dogmatics to the social transformation of society.

Tillich's response deals more seriously with Marx' critique, insisting that theory and practice must be united. He attempts to unite them in his model of religous socialism. Like Marx, Tillich recognizes the problem of alienation, that man is not what he essentially ought to be. Tillich's solution is that man becomes his essential nature in the boundary situation, where the eternal or ultimate being drives man to the depth of his being. On the boundary, man can follow the inner law of his true or essential being. The weakness in this response is that, although Tillich argues that theory should be combined with praxis, he does not build praxis into his ontology.

Niebuhr's response is perhaps the best of the three because of his combining a thorough and perceptive analysis of the political and economic structures and the class structure within the framework of a dialectical theology of the cross. Niebuhr tries to correct the idealistic Marxist vision of the future and its optimistic view of man's nature. However, we find his model of Christian realism deficient for two reasons. First, his development of agape overly emphasizes the willing of justice to others. His concern with the notion of justice and his heavy emphasis on the pervasiveness of sin keep him from developing a creative theology dealing with a radical transformation of society. Second, his realism lacks an eschatological element, an ideal of greater freedom toward which the oppressed might strive.

Developing the two criteria of faith and praxis is the first step of the methodology. The second step involves applying these two criteria to the theological models of the radical utopians. This step is carried out in three phases, corresponding to the three common characteristics found in the contemporary models: liberation, imagination, and praxis. In the first phase, we examine the three liberation theologies of Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann, defining the various dimensions of the liberation process and showing their interrelationship. We explain how faith affects the political transformation of society within each system. This is the task of Chapter III.

In the second phase undertaken in Chapter IV, the objective is to determine the precise function of the imagination or utopian thinking within the process of liberation. As we note in the introduction, the creative dimension is an element that is especially significant as a response to the Marxist critique because it stresses man's active and creative role much more than do the responses of Barth, Tillich, and Niebuhr. Moreover, as we note in Chapter V, Marx regards inventive language which is not grounded in the economic structure as utopian or unreal. We also examine the relation between imagination and faith in each of the models.

Once the function of the imagination within the liberation process is established, we move to the third phase in Chapter V. Here we try to determine how each model grounds its theological theory in praxis. We express this relationship in propositional form. In response to Marx' critique of religion, we ask whether faith, and specifically man's creative participation through his power of the imagination, is essentially related to the political and economic transformation of society. Marx' answer to this question, based on his criticism of Hegel, religion, and the socialist utopians, is negative. The liberation theologians, or radical utopians, answer affirmatively. But in contrast to Hegel's and the socialist utopians' interpretations, these theologies deal with liberation of the oppressed through the changing of social structures, which is the major thrust of Marx' theory. For Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann the imagination is directed toward that goal. We have tried to determine whether each theologian's utopian thinking is in fact grounded in historical praxis, or whether it is illusion (Freud) or opiate (Marx). The argument presented is that imagination functions in the liberation process by creating new visions for people's emancipation and by working toward the realization of those visions. All three theologians, therefore, explain the imagination in terms of social transformation.

The second important question in this third phase is whether each theologian's assertion that the imagination significantly affects radical change within a community can be verified. We are speaking here about the realization of a vision of a new person and/or a new society and not about the final vision which comes with the full realization of the Kingdom. Alves and Gutierrez state that the new is verified in the future, although the liberating process begins in the present. Moltmann does not speak about man's creating a new person in a new society, but always in terms of *novum ultimum* of the Kingdom which is not directly verifiable. By means of the dialectic, the new, expressed in a free people and better living conditions, is rendered credible. In all three instances, the utopias within history which the three theologians describe must be accompanied by social changes. Since an empirical verification lies in the historical future, we obviously can make no judgment in the present regarding the utopian models of messianic humanism, theology of liberation, and theology of hope. Instead, we concentrate on an internal critique of the values that constitute each of these models. Our conclusions and a discussion of these conclusions are presented in the following section.

Conclusions

The Response of Messianic Humanism (Alves)

Following the two guideposts of faith and praxis, we conclude that the paradigm of messianic humanism is not a satisfactory response to the critique of Marx. The fundamental reason for this conclusion is that the relationship between the dimensions of the transcendent, of man's creative activity, and of the political and economic dimensions are not adequately integrated. The evidence supporting this conclusion will be discussed under four headings: first, faith and the political liberation of a people; second, the power of God and the power of man; third, the notion of freedom; fourth, Alves' analysis of Marxism.

According to messianic humanism the liberation of a people takes place through the power and freedom of God, not through man's powers. Of course, man participates in the liberating process through freedom given him by God. Man by himself is weak, and even in spite of the absence of all subjective and objective possibilities of freedom, the oppressed may be liberated by God who is the suffering servant. Political bondage basically is the elimination of the possibility of a people for shaping its own destiny. As we pointed out in Chaters III and V, Alves' entire discussion of the political forms of alienation and liberation is vague and abstract. He rarely discusses concrete cases of political enslavement. Although he finds serious fault with capitalism and Marxism, he fails to discuss other possible political and economic models. Absent from his theory is a discussion of class conflict, although he states that liberation is basically conflictual. There is no discussion of the injustices in modern society. Such omissions from a political model of theology suggest that Alves has failed to encounter the concrete political and economic realities and to integrate them into his theological system.

Another weakness regarding the relation between God's power and political liberation is Alves' lack of consistency in dealing with the dialectics of liberation. In *A Theology of Human Hope*, he builds his model on the moments of the negation of the negation, and affirmation or creation of the new. There he writes that the negation of the present evil is essentially an affirmation of something for the present and for the future. But in a work written two years later, he speaks of the liberation of a people as essentially a positive reality. In trying to distinguish his model from a revolutionary model, he seems to eliminate, or at least considerably reduce, the importance of the negative aspect of liberation.[2]

The second instance where a better synthesis is needed is the relation between God's effective power in the liberating process and man's creative participation in the same process. One of the attractive features of Alves' political theology is his insistence that both grace and creativity must be preserved. Man's creative part in the liberating process is strongly emphasized in Alves' discussion of imagination. Man is unfinished, he says, and the task to continue creation is man's action enclosed in God's action. Quoting Teilhard de Chardin, he writes: "In action I adhere to the creative power of God; I coincide with it."[3] It is clear that God and man must work together to create a new tomorrow. But Alves fails to clarify *how* God's action and man's action coincide. At one point when Alves discusses the power of man's creative imagination, he exalts man's creative powers. At another time when arguing against revolutionary activity such as Marxism, he stresses the power of God's positive action. Downplaying the best efforts of any community movements, such as the woman's liberation movement, the civil rights movement, and national liberation movements, he says that the community of freedom is brought about in a miraculous manner. If man

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truly has creative powers, they would seem to be helpful in such worthwhile and often creative movements. Perhaps the crucial question here is whether man's creative powers are effective when man himself is free and when he uses his freedom in cooperation with God's power. But this would seem to be the case in at least some of the situations in the political events mentioned above. Alves needs to clarify how God's gratuitous action coincides with man's creative action. This should include an explanation of how the creative imagination of man operates in accordance with God's power.

The third point deals with Alves' concept of freedom. As we pointed out in the last chapter, Alves never gives a complete definition of freedom. Our interpretation of his notion of freedom is that it is a creative, dialectical process of a community which brings something new into history. It involves the gift of God, without which freedom is impossible. We judge this notion of freedom to be inadequate for the following reasons: first, it lacks the element of personal liberation; second, social freedom is defined in terms of a community's ability to create the new, and since the new is that which is human and free, the definition is tautological; third, the values of freedom and human life are too abstract to be helful in trying to implement their realization in the new society. As we pointed out in Chapter V, a liberation theology ought to include not only a treatment of what it takes to make and to keep a community human and free, but also how to maintain justice among all the people within that community.

The fourth and final point is concerned with Alves' interpretation of Marx. While Alves does make some perceptive critical remarks regarding Marxism, his interpretation of Marx' thought is nearly always focused on the qualities of the older Marx. What this means is that Alves views Marxism nearly always as a science with its deterministic, quantitative aspects, and less often as a humanistic philosophy stressed by the younger Marx. As a consequence, Alves looks with suspicion on the Christian-Marxist dialogue. He sees the Christian faith losing its critical edge in its naive attempts to bring about a synthesis with Marxism. Alves erroneously identifies Marxism with the philosophy of positivism. Finally, he fails to discuss the concept of personal and social sin in relation to Marx' notion of alienation.

We conclude that the theology of Rubem Alves is not a good response to the Marxist critique of religion. On the side of theory, his theology lacks a good synthesis between the mutual participation of God and man in creating a liberated society and the effect of this creative activity in the political realm. On the side of praxis, it is never clear how the utopia of messianic humanism might *concretely* affect the political transformation of a particular society. For example, one would like to know how man's creative imagination contributes to the struggle between the oppressed and the oppressors. One sometimes gets the impression that political liberation in Alves' system is the transformation of man's consciousness only, and not a radical change in the conditions and structures of man's society. In this respect he seems to be more Hegelian than Marxist.

Gutierrez and the Theology of Liberation

Gustavo Gutierrez' theological model has attempted to incorporate elements of the method and the content of Marx and Engels much more deliberately and extensively than either Alves or Moltmann. In his theology of liberation, he attempts to construct a theology which stresses critical reflection on the pastoral activity of a people in the world. This has potentially greater possibilities in dealing with Marxism than have the models of Alves and Moltmann, which are basically theologies first constructed *in abstracto* from the Word of God and then directed toward, and applied to, concrete practice. With regard to content, Gutierrez accepts the Marxist notions of the inevitability of the class struggle, the desirability of a classless society, the necessity for a social revolution of the oppressed, and the expropriation of capital. We find that his theological theory, which includes his notion of utopia, is related to the realities of Latin America and directed toward the radical transformation of the oppressive structures in Latin American society.

Yet we have difficulty with his undeveloped methodology, his extensive, yet uncritical, acceptance of many Marxist categories, and his treatment of the relevance of faith in the liberation process. In the light of these observations and others mentioned below and, on the basis of our principle of integration of both the faith and the praxis criteria, it is our contention that this model is not an adequate response to Marxism. Our conclusion is based on the following six factors: first, Gutierrez' theological method is incomplete; second, the importance of the Christian's faith in the liberating process is not sufficiently penetrated; third, the utopian dimension needs further clarification; fourth, he fails to treat adequately the personal aspect of liberation; fifth, he neglects the past in the liberating process; and sixth, he is insufficiently critical of Marxist thought.

The weakness of his theological method appears at two points. The first is found in his definition of theology. When he describes his method as a critical reflection on historical praxis in the light of faith, one remains uncertain what methodological criteria are operating at each step of the procedure. This much is clear from his principal work. First he begins with an examination of social praxis in Latin America. He examines the economic and political realities dealing with developmentalism and the theological statements which have emerged from conferences of priests and bishops in Latin America. Second, he draws key themes from these theological pastoral statements. Third, he poses questions on the basis of his initial reflection on these statements. The questions then become the framework for his theological reflection. These questions are concerned with the meaning of faith, spirituality, conciliation and conflict, church unity, the church's stance toward the poor and toward revolution, and the question of witnessing to poverty.[4] Although these are all important questions, we wonder why he raises these questions and not others. He fails to set down his criteria for the selection process. While some of the questions emerge from the theological statements and themes, others do not. Other important questions, based on the data he presents, occur to us. For example, we wonder why Gutierrez does not ask the question whether faith is necessary at all, in the light of a conservative Latin American church and a zealous and committed corps of nonbelievers. The important question regarding the Christian's participation in violent activity is not raised. Finally, the question whether the model of development is an intrinsically unjust political and economic one seems to be important. Gutierrez gives no criteria according to which he selects certain questions. The criteria supplied by faith are operative only after the questions have been posed and the basic direction of his reflection has been determined. One senses a certain lack of objectivity in his selective process.

A second weakness in his method is indicated in the narrow selection of content on which he reflects. Essentially this content consists of a brief survey of the political and economic factors in Latin America since the 1950s and the statements issuing from ecumenical councils, bishops' conferences, and student movements.[5] Absent from the content are sociological data describing the living conditions of poor urban dwellers and farmers, any description of the religious beliefs and heritage of the people, and a sampling of the opinions of ordinary people regarding problems of crime, jobs, violence, and outside capitalists. Such content seems invaluable for critical reflection.

The second factor, that of the role of faith for those engaged in the process of liberation, is an important one in Latin America because many Christians have left the church to join revolutionary movements. For these men and women, Christianity has become an opiate. It is clear that Gutierrez is addressing them more than he is the conservatives of the far right. But in his attempt to make Christianity relevant to the revolutionary, he does not penetrate very deeply into the meaning of Christian faith for the social revolution. According to Gutierrez the Word of God is the foundation and the meaning of all human existence. Moreover, he stresses the importance of the critical negativity of faith against any absolutizing of a particular revolution, which is an important contribution of Christian faith to any revolution. As for the commitment of faith,

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Gutierrez acknowledges the depth of the commitment of Marxist revolutionaries. The question that remains for the Christian is "Why faith?" In his constant theme of the creation of a new man in a new society, Gutierrez speaks of man transforming himself by "conquering his liberty throughout his existence and history." At another place he says that utopia is a human act, but a work that is not alien to the gospel. Both imply each other, he says.[6] It is not clear from such statements how God's grace influences man's historical initiative and creativity.

Regarding the third factor of the utopian dimension, it is problematic whether this is really a distinct dimension. It seems to be a convenient construct to demonstrate how Marxists and Christians have something in common that is neither Marxist science nor Christian faith. We suggested in Chapter V that utopia may be a new form of the natural law, which emphasizes man's creative role in shaping his own destiny. The integrating and mediating functions of this dimension need to be clarified.

The fourth factor concerns Gutierrez' almost total neglect of personal and psychological liberation. With the exception of a small passage in Chapter II of *A Theology of Liberation*, he does not develop what liberation involves for the individual.[7] What does conscientization mean for the regular churchgoers, the farmers, and people who belong to no association or movement? Gutierrez recognizes the need to integrate the personal and the social when he states:

> Moreover, alienation and exploitation as well as the very struggle for liberation from them have ramifications on the personal and psychological planes which it would be dangerous to overlook in the process of constructing a new society and a new man.[8]

We quite agree. But Gutierrez seems to have overlooked them in all of his writings.

The fifth factor deals with the past. Gutierrez speaks about the recent past of oppression within Latin America, but the recent past extends back thirty years or so. He does not return to the very beginning of oppression originating with the colonization by the *conquistadores* and continuing down to the imperialistic practices of foreign nations. As we have seen in the black liberation movement in the United States, it is important that an oppressed people return to its roots to gain an appreciation of its unique culture and to see how a people came to be oppressed. Gutierrez neglects the past. But an understanding of the past is important for establishing both identity and a sense of purpose. Both are necessary before a revolutionary movement can pick up momentum.

The final factor concerns his uncritical position toward Marxism. We are impressed with Gutierrez' familiarity with Marxist thought, including his sophisticated knowledge of the various attempts at *rapprochement* between Christians and Marxists. At the same time, he rarely offers a critical evaluation of Marxist thought.[9] In his principal work, Gutierrez offers no critical evaluation whatever. On the contrary, he gives Marxism credit for pushing Christianity to work toward liberation from oppressive conditions. Without this critical evaluation, his theology sounds doctrinaire. In developing a theology that reflects on praxis, Gutierrez needs to show not only how faith is enriched by the praxis of pastoral action, but how faith in turn challenges praxis, frees it from ideology, and redirects it to something more human, just, and freeing. Utopia has this function, but uotpia is a human work and is not faith. Gutierrez states the class struggle as if it were a fact and sees some form of classless society as desirable. But he must wrestle with the problem and dangers of misuse of power in a classless society as Reinhold Niebuhr has done.

We have given some reasons why his theology of liberation does not provide an adequate response to the Marxist critique of religion. Clearly Gutierrez' theology is not an opiate for the oppressed and confirmation of the status quo. He seems to have successfully avoided two of the pitfalls he set out to avoid, the pitfalls of idealism and spiritualism on the one hand, and the empirical type which is characterized by shallow analysis and programs aimed at solving immediate problems. At the same time, because of its uncritical co-option of Marxist methods and ideas, his theology of liberation tends to become ideological in the direction of a Marxist bias. In his attempt to show that history is one and that all people, Marxists and Christians alike, have a vocation to be in communion with God through grace and expressed in a transformation of the unjust society, Gutierrez does not clearly point out the tension that must always exist between Christ and culture, and, in this case, between Christian faith and Marxist ideology.

Moltmann and Theology of Hope

Of the three models of liberation theology considered in this research, we find Jürgen Moltmann's theology of hope the most synthetic and best developed theology. His theology of trinitarian faith, christology, the doctrine of the church, and his political theology form an integral whole. The unifying element between his doctrine of the faith and its political implications is the crucified God. He has creatively synthesized his theology of hope from biblical sources, relying mainly on the scriptural studies of Ernst Käsemann and Gerhard von Rad, the systematic theology of Karl Barth, and the Marxist philosophy, clarified greatly through dialogues with Ernst Bloch.[10]

Our general assessment, however, is that the theology of hope is not a completely satisfactory response to the Marxist critique of religion. The basic reason is one that stems from his theological principle that human history is a predicate of God's Word revealed as a future promise. As we pointed out in Chapter V, this leads to a dualism between God's transcendent future promise and the present, empirical world. God is a God who is before us, not in the midst of us. The core of God's promise is the resurrection, which is a historical event that occurred in the past and will come again. But we experience it now only in anticipation through the power of the Spirit of Jesus, who justifies and gives us mercy and love. This justification or liberation is analogous to the resurrection through *faith*. Moltmann does not recognize any epiphanies or other analogies of *being* which are a foretaste of the future resurrection. This raises the question about how one can recognize a promise by God, whether the promise is being realized or broken. A revealing of something which has not yet happened but which is affecting us now is quite difficult to discern. Moltmann is not helpful in answering this question.

Our second criticism of Moltmann is concerned with the relation of images of faith to concrete praxis. Moltmann's hermeneutic not only interprets faith in the light of history, but is performative, involving the criterion of praxis directed toward the transformation of the world. The hermeneutic outlines in a very general way the means and methods of practical liberation, as, for example, the way in which games are used to dominate people and the way that spontaneous games can liberate. On the transcendent side of this praxis, the cross of Christ becomes the basic criterion for distinguishing true freedom from idolatry. On the immanent side, the practice of negating the negative should be undertaken by both Christians and Marxists, who can cooperate in transforming the unjust and unfree conditions of society. Faith, which is the foundation of liberation, alone frees man from the bondage of anxiety and selfishness, thus freeing him to hope through creative action.

Our disagreement with Moltmann is that he stresses the necessity of faith *prior* to liberating praxis and seems to deny the possibility of receiving faith *in* and *through* praxis. The proclamation and acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ is always presupposed in truly liberating activity.[11] Moltmann does not accept an anonymous Christianity. This has many implications for the secular humanist and the Marxist, who recognize no transcendent gospel as relevant to their humanizing and revolutionary activity. While agreeing with Moltmann on the necessity of faith for authentic liberation, we maintain that action, because of its demanding commitment and sacrifice, can itself be an expression of acceptance of the Other, symbolized perhaps by a concern for, and commitment to, an oppressed people. In other words, faith may arise, not because the action in itself justifies a person's existence, but because the deed may reveal the deeper meaning of one's life, the experience of authentic self-donation, and the revelation of mystery to which one may surrender in a non-thematic kind of faith.

Our third criticism is related to Moltmann's principle of identification. Political identification of Christian churches and Christians themselves with the oppressed, forsaken, and humiliated is a principle of action that grows out of the cross of Christ and out of Matthew 25 ("Whatever you do to the least of my brothers . . ."). The difficulty we find with Moltmann on this point is that, while he urges churches and Christians to identify with the poor and humiliated, the nature of this identification is more on the level of principle and proclamation than on the level of committed action. He does not give *concrete* examples of what identifying with the humanity of the oppressed means, aside from an open acceptance of people of all religions, races, and classes and the proclamation of the Word of faith, love, and hope. In one of his most recent writings, Moltmann discusses the practical goals and means of liberation.

> A theology of hope has for its goal a practical liberation of men from the chains of sin, of law, and of anxiety; its desire is to provide concrete liberation from the demonic circle of oppression, of exploitation, and of evil death. Though not the only means, the sermon is one of the best for liberating the internally and externally oppressed man for faith, love, and hope.[12]

In addition to identifying with the humiliated, poor, and oppressed by proclamation of the Word through sermons, Moltmann defines the practical task of the church as bringing peace and reconciliation to a divided world. His examples of identification are very general in nature and fail to indicate the real complexities of political, economic, and cultural bondage. For example, after a discussion of the vicious circle of poverty in which millions of immigrant workers in Northern Europe are trapped, Moltmann says that the only way to break out of this demonic circle is "for all parties to work hard for social justice, for the redistribution of economic power."[13] He does not explain who the parties are, what working hard for social justice means, or what redistributing economic power would entail. In a much earlier writing, he discusses the transformation of world conditions of injustice in a much more radical way. Outlining seven theses, which echo the eleven theses of Marx on Feuerbach, Moltmann in his fifth thesis, after heaping praise on Martin Luther King's civil rights action, says that the humane revolution is "to subvert and abolish the whole master-slave relationship."[14] But in his later writings, his political theology of liberation sounds more like a theology of orderly systematic change, which makes appeals to the goodwill of "all parties" for dialogue, the changing of men's hearts, tolerance of cultural diversity, and bringing "friendliness into the world of darkness and cold indifference."[15] In summary, we find Moltmann's expression of the principle of identification to be unsatisfactory because of its general appeal to all people, particularly to those in power and because the appeal itself does not account for the real complexities of the political, economic, and social world. His appeals sound like clichés: working for God's peace means "getting human rights recognized" and "allowing people to experience identity, self-confidence, and self-respect."[16] As we pointed out in Chapter V, Marx and Engels criticize the socialist utopians for making general appeals and for the avoidance of class conflict. Moltmann in his later writings seems to do just that, and in so doing seems to dilute his principle of identification with the oppressed into an identification with all people.

On the positive side we find that his balancing of his political ethics with his aesthetics, which stress God's glory and man's participation in that glory through celebration of existence, a healthy corrective to a revolutionary tendency toward violence and political idolatry. The realm of work is to be complemented by play; the desire to *have* and to *achieve* is to be dialectically balanced by *being*. The weakness we noted in Chapter V is that Moltmann subordinates the intrinsic value of work to that of play, which seems to follow from his heavy emphasis on the liberation from the coercion of work and anxiety.

Finally, we think that Moltmann does well in evaluating Marx and Marxism, both by his incorporating some

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insights of Marx into his own theology and by pointing out some of the flaws of Marxist philosophy. One of the insights is the importance of praxis, which Moltmann accepts as one of the criteria of an authentic faith. We fault him for his lack of concreteness in drawing out the radical implications of what it means to transform society and to really identify with the poor, suffering, and oppressed. Although Moltmann is very critical of Marx, he does recognize the latter's "opiate critique" of religion as a valid description of an essential element of religion. For Moltmann this "sigh of the oppressed" is the sigh of the crucified God present in his people, which then should lead the Christian to negate the evil that causes the suffering.

Summary Statement

The goal of this dissertation has been to determine whether the liberation theologies of Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann offer an adequate response to the Marxist critique of religion. Our investigation has led us to the conclusion that none of the responses is completely satisfactory. However, the three theologies, while deficient in some respects, have made valuable contributions to the Christian-Marxist dialogue. On the basis of our study of these political theologies, we present six elements which are important for constructing an adequate theology in response to the Marxist critique.

The first element is that of integration. In order to avoid the ideological pitfalls of spiritualism and of materialism, it is necessary to create a theology which integrates both the dogmatic principles derived from religion and an ethic of social action derived from social man's experience. This means that the theologian cannot afford to engage all of his energy by beginning with dogma which is abstracted from the social and political realities of society. Nor ought he presume that theological reflection on historical praxis can be achieved apart from the theological values and principles. Both aspects of the investigation must be carried out in a dialectic with the other. What must be avoided is a dogmatic theology that has little relevance for the social, political, and economic issues, and a theological reflection on praxis which is unrelated to the religious values. Moltmann, on the one hand, has difficulty relating his theological principles to concrete sociopolitical problems. Gutierrez and Alves, on the other hand, fail to indicate clearly how Christian values inform their reflection on praxis. What is needed, therefore, is a theological method for reflection on praxis.

The second element is related to praxis. The political theologian must clarify what he means by Christian praxis. None of the three theologians in this research clearly distinguishes the term from the Marxist usage, although all have a meaning somewhat different from the Marxist usage. Does Christian praxis, for example, always involve radical transformation of society, as Marx understands it, or does the term mean social action that is not necessarily radical and/or conflictual?

The third element is concerned with the relationship between God's gratuity and man's creative powers. It is necessary to clarify whether and how man's creative activity can be salvific. In what sense is man a co-creator with God? The importance of explicit faith for the revolutionary must be further developed.

The fourth element deals with the principle of identification. The dilemma raised by the liberation theologians is this: on the one hand, there is danger of a theology becoming ideological when it identifies with one class and when it examines all ethical issues on an oppressed-oppressor axis; on the other hand, there is the danger of diluting the prophetic dimension of the gospel when a universal appeal is made to all classes without first confronting the injustices between them. It is important, therefore, to work out the principle of identification together with the theology of reconciliation.

The fifth element concerns the relation between personal liberation of each member of society and the political liberation of the community from dehumanizing conditions. A theology which overemphasizes political liberation can itself be a dehumanizing theology by ignoring the unique problems faced by individuals within society. Moltmann has offered the most help in this regard with his description of the five dimensions of liberation, all of which must be dealt with.

The sixth element is that of the imagination. Imagination has been used in different senses by the three liberation theologians: it is a critical power; it is creative insight; and it is a spontaneous activity which fosters the celebration of life. Each of these functions is important for creating a more liberated society. The imagination helps balance the work of revolution by playful celebration.

General Observations

We began this research by asking whether the new theological language spoken today in many quarters has made any gains over the old languages in its dialogue with

Marxism. Our general response is that it has made some progress not only in its dialogue with Marxism but in its attempts to build a political theology. We call the creators of the new language "radical utopians" because they emphasize some aspects of radical political change and because they stress man's creative capacity to build qualitatively new life styles or utopias. While it remains unclear precisely what is meant by a *qualitatively new* life style and the *new* man, it is clear that man is given greater responsibility to change his life and the political conditions affecting his life. The element of revolutionary change is not new in theological circles, nor is the element of the imagination. But the convergence of these two elements within political theology seems to be a new trend. Some observations about this emerging language learned from our studies of the three radical utopians follow.

The element of the creative imagination found within the theological languages of Alves, Gutierrez, and Moltmann underlines man's active role in creating not only better political and economic structures but especially a more liberated person. Within the Roman Catholic tradition, Gutierrez continues in the direction, begun in recent times by Teilhard de Chardin and others, which affirms man's participation with the Lord of the universe in transforming nature. For Gutierrez the creative activity of man is salvific. Within the Protestant tradition Moltmann and especially Alves begin to move away from man's passive role of obedience to one that is a more active participation in God's plan. Rubem Alves refers to man as a "co-creator" with God. The theology of Alves, in contrast to Moltmann but in agreement with Gutierrez, stresses not only the *negation* of the present, but also the creative *affirmation* of the present which gives rise to a new future. While Moltmann also stresses man's role as a participant in the building up of a new future, it is fundamentally God's creative action which brings man the new future. However, the creative role of man, while problematic in Moltmann's early writings, is beginning to emerge with his development of man's imagination. Nevertheless, Moltmann's theology remains traditional in the sense that it interprets man's experience of reality as basically an experience of negativity or of a crisis. Man's task is to overcome the alienation of the traditional order.

As we indicated in Chapters IV and V, each theologian's concept of the imagination and/or utopia is different. None has developed a full-blown theory of the imagination, but Moltmann must be credited for having gone further than the other two in elaborating the various expressions of the imagination and in showing how each functions in action. For all three men the imagination functions dialectically, corresponding to positive and negative functions of God's Word. Imagination as used by the radical utopians brings out the rational element of the mind as well as the emotional element of the heart.

That the concept of the imagination and the language of aesthetics should surface in liberation theology is understandable. As we have indicated, to create is to provide new alternatives which open up new possibilities for change. Latin American liberation theology is struggling to be free from a neocolonial dependence. As some Latin Americans see it, models of development created by the Western powers and the model of Marxist socialism developed by Lenin and Stalin and Mao have been and will continue to be destructive within the Latin American political and cultural situation. Hence, Latins are searching for new, imaginative ways rather than copying models that keep them subjugated both politically and culturally.

Liberation theology stresses the importance of examining root causes of world poverty, domination and subjugation of peoples, and cultural alienation. Gutierrez' analysis is the most penetrating of the three. Alves stays on a very general level of analysis that weakens his theology. Included in the study of root causes is a strong awareness on the part of all three theologians regarding ideology. This awareness, due in no small measure to Marx' influence, has led each theologian to investigate not only political ideologies, but church ideologies and ideologies built into theologies. In a very real sense, each of these new theological languages is an attempt to liberate theology. Gutierrez' model, while deficient in many respects and really quite rudimentary, offers the greatest challenge to contemporary theologians. It is no easy task to build a theology which begins by critically reflecting on human action, but it appears to be a direction in which more and more theologians will move.

Finally, with regard to the specific influence of Marx' philosophy on these theologies, there is a clear difference in each one's treatment. While all strive to take into account the importance of praxis, including the felt needs of people, each one responds differently. Gutierrez adopts more ideas from Marx than the other two. He gives the greatest attention to the reality of the class struggle.

Alves almost entirely avoids the struggle, except in very general terms. While Gutierrez is not critical enough of Marxism, Moltmann accepts some concepts and rejects others. Alves suspiciously stands at a distance. All quote Marx' famous eleventh thesis on Feuerbach, implying that theologians, unlike philosophers, should change the world, not simply interpret it.

Notes

[1] Karl Rahner, "Christianity and Ideology," *The Curch and the World*, Concilium Series, Vol. VI, ed. by Johannes B. Metz (New York: Paulist Press, 1965), pp. 41-58.

[2] Rubem A. Alves, "The Hermeneutics of the Symbol," *Theology Today*, XXIX (April 1972), 46-53.

[3] Rubem A. Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope* (Cleveland: Corpus Books, 1969), p. 144.

[4] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*. trans. and ed. by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1973), pp. 133-140.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 81-92, 101-119.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 230.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Gustavo Gutierrez, "Marxismo y Cristianismo," *Cristianos Latinoamericanos y Socialismo*, trans. by T. Matt Garr (Bogotá: Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo e Integración de América Latina, 1971), pp. 15-35.

[10] George Hunsinger, "The Crucified God and the Political Theology of Violence: A Critical Survey of Jürgen Moltmann's Recent Thought: II," *The Heythrop Journal*, XIV (October 1973), 391-392.

[11] Jürgen Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, trans. by M. Douglas Meeks (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), pp. 102, 122.

[12] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Gospel of Liberation*, trans. by H. Wayne Pipkin (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1973), pp. 9-11.

[13] Jürgen Moltmann, "Bringing Peace to a Divided World," *Theology Digest*, XX (Winter 1972), 337.

[14] Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, pp. 142-143.

[15] Jürgen Moltmann, "Freedom in the Light of Hope," *The Japan Christian Quarterly*, XXXIX (Summer 1973), 154; *Der gekreuzigte Gott*, chapter VIII; *The Gospel of Liberation*, pp. 105-112.

[16] Moltman, "Bringing Peace," pp. 338-339.

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